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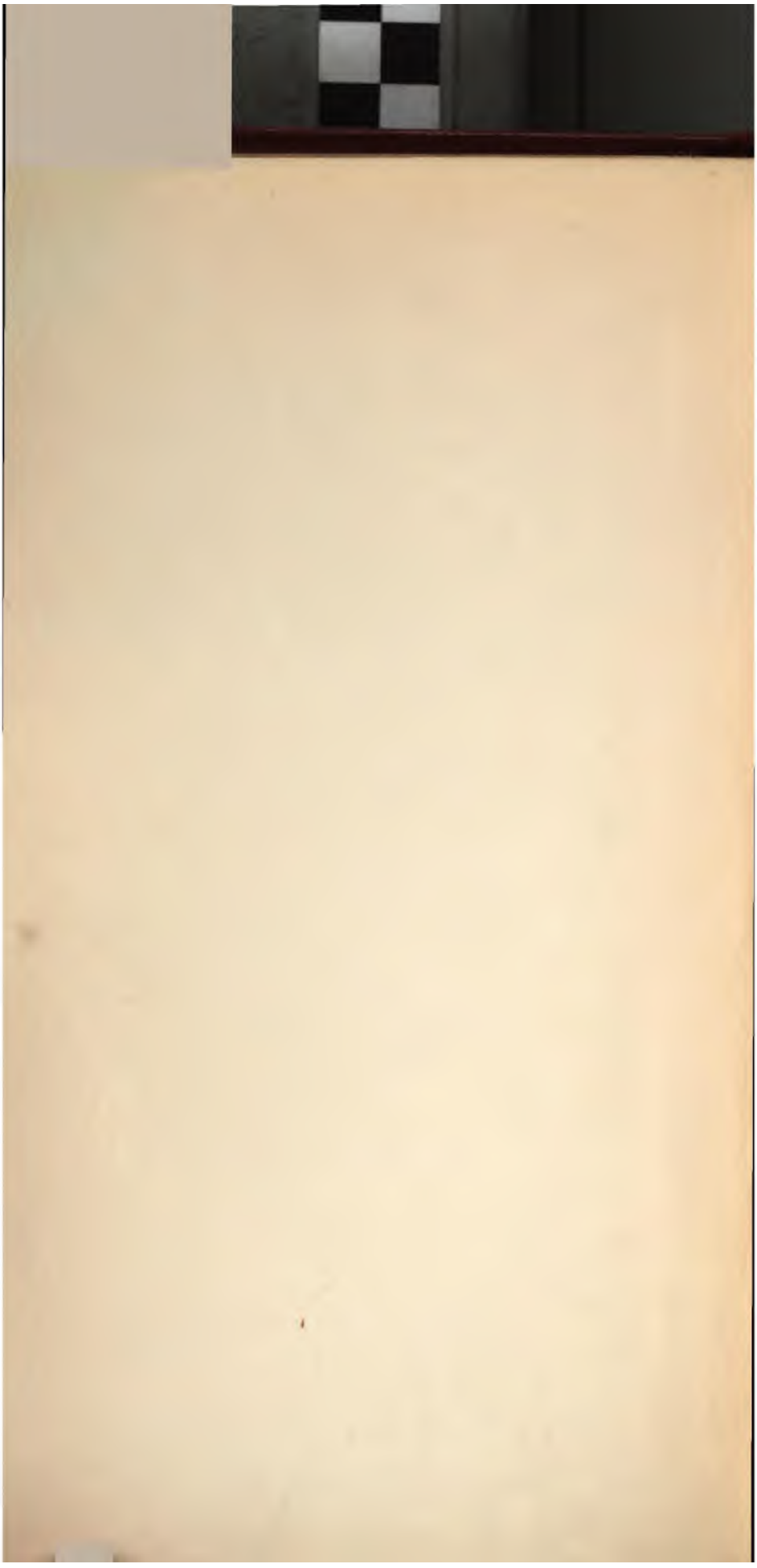
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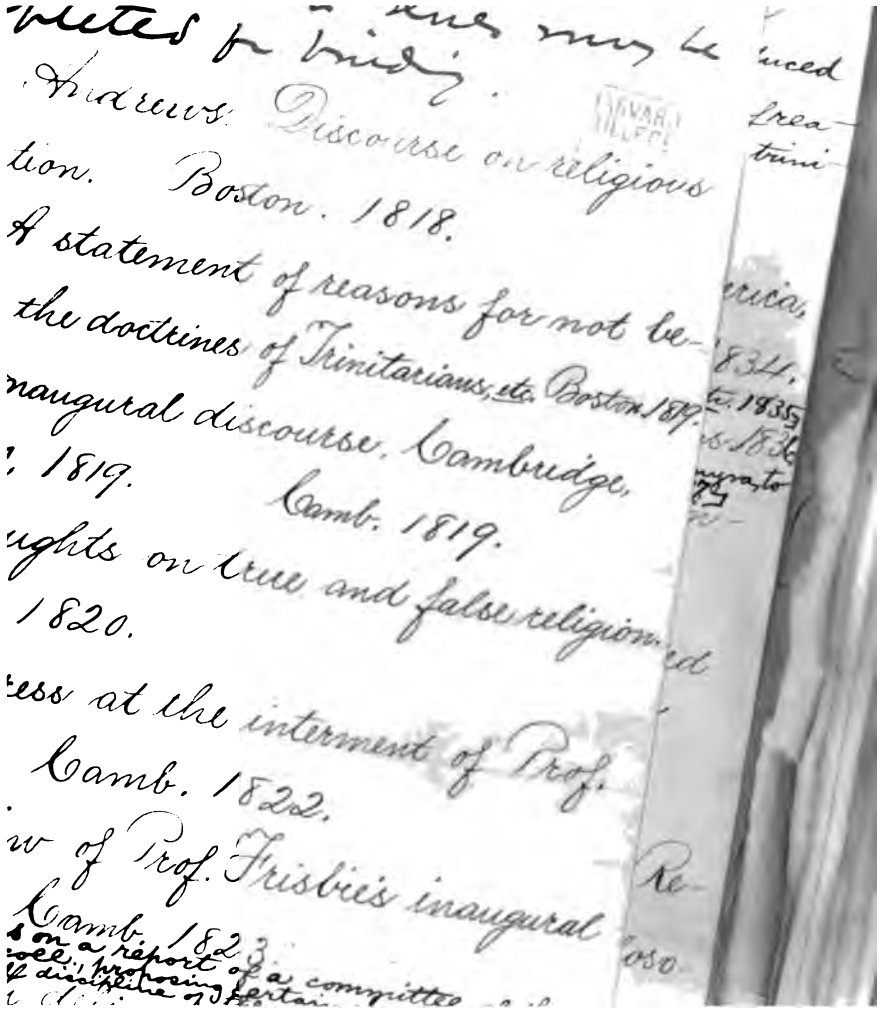





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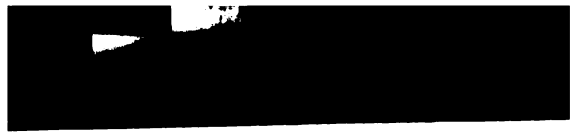
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^^^ Norton, Andrews. Additiona
tices of Mr. Buckminster. [B.

Norton, Andrews. [2] Review of a sermon de-
livered at N.Y., Dec. 7, 1826. By W. E. Channing. B. 1826
——— On the change of character in persons
spoken of in the New Testament, as produced
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ever. [B. B. Review of Prof. Norton's Statement of reas-
sons for not believing the doctrines of trini-
tarians, etc. B. 1833.
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by the author of 'Cyril Thornton'." 1834.
——— [Review of] A memoir of James Jackson, jr. [B. etc. 1835]
——— On the poetry of Mrs. Hemans 1836
——— [Review of] Letters of L. M. Piso, from Palmyra, to
his Friend, Marcus Cicilius, at Rome [B. 1837]
^^^ Discourse on the latest form of in-
fidelity. Camb. 1839.
——— Remarks on a pamphlet entitled
"The latest form of infidelity examined."
Camb. 1839.
——— Two articles from the Princeton Re-
view concerning the transcendental philoso-
phy of the Germans, &c. Camb. 1840.
——— [Review of] Memoir and correspondence of
Mrs. Grant of Laggan. [B. 1845]
——— Additions made in the second
edition of the 1st vol. of Norton's evidences
of the genuineness of the Gospels.
Camb. 1846.
——— [Letter on the rise and early progress
of unitarianism in the U. S.]







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# DISCOURSE

# ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION;

DELIVERED AT HINGHAM,

MAY 20, 1818.

BEFORE THE TRUSTEES OF THE DERBY ACADEMY;

BEING THE ANNUAL DERBY LECTURE.

By ANDREWS NORTON, A.M.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY WELLS AND LILLY.
1818.

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Gift of Rev F. W. Holland
of Boston

NOTE.

*The Derby Lecture is delivered in the aft*
*and there is an Exhibition by the students of t*
*emy on the forenoon of the same day ; which i*
*to in the commencement of the following discour*
*discourse concludes, as usual, with an addre*
*students.*

# DISCOURSE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

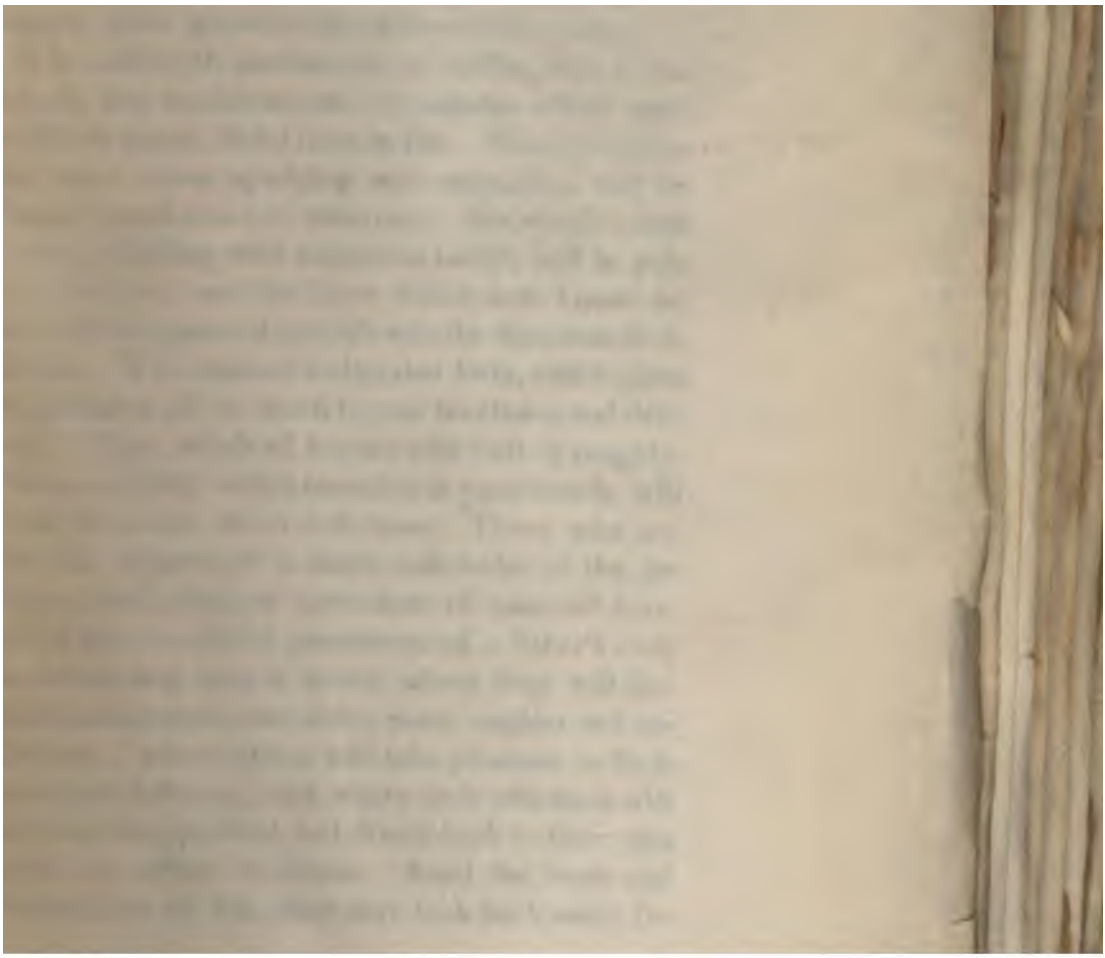
DEUT. vi. 6. 7.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children; and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

UPON such an occasion as that on which we have been this morning assembled, our first natural emotion is one of unmingled pleasure, at witnessing the display of those powers, which are just beginning to unfold themselves, and give the promise of future usefulness; and of those warm and open affections, which as yet are undisciplined indeed, but at the same time uninjured, by the accidents of the world. The poet and the moralist have both loved to trace the analogies between the first part of life, and the fine season of the year, which is now beginning to spread its beauties around us. It is delightful to contemplate human nature in its springtime, in its freshness and verdure, rich in its flowers and blos-

soms, and sparkling with the morning sunshine upon the dew of youth.

But this first feeling of pleasure is succeeded by a deeper and more sober interest, when we recollect that the characters of those whom we now regard but as children, are rapidly forming; and that they are fast advancing to take their places by our side, and to engage with us in the duties of life. The habit of distinctly contemplating what we certainly know concerning the future, is one of the most importance to be acquired, and one of the last which we acquire. They can hardly feel or imagine, and we are too apt to forget, that in a few years they may meet us as associates and friends; that we may look to them for assistance in honourable exertion; and that in the strength of manhood they may minister to the old age of those from whom they now receive protection. The children who are present with us may, some of them, be among those who will, in our day, give a tone and character to society, and will leave the impress of their minds upon the age in which we live. They who are now so sensible to our praise, may hereafter be among those whose approbation we shall most value; and if we should leave a name behind us that men will love to cherish, they may be among the first to pay honour to our memory. In looking thus forward, our thoughts spread themselves over that future scene into which we are ad-









vancing : we anticipate the progress of that moral and intellectual improvement, which we have so much reason to hope for ; and we cannot forget how much, how entirely, one might almost say, this improvement will depend upon the direction and impulse now given to the minds of the young.

It is still with another sort of feeling, that we anticipate the accidents and vicissitudes which may, or which must, befal them in life. That eye which you have seen sparkling with animation, will be dimmed with tears of bitterness ; that cheek which is now glowing with exuberant health, will be pale with sorrow ; and the heart which now knows no care, will be pierced through with the sharpness of affliction. You cannot shelter that form, which gives the promise of so much female loveliness and delicacy. The winds of heaven will visit it roughly. The sensibility which trembles at your touch, will bleed beneath harsh inflictions. Those who are now the objects of so much solicitude, of the indulgent and anxious tenderness of maternal love, and of the watchful providence of a father's care, are advancing into a world, where they will find much selfishness, and suffer much neglect and unkindness ; where others will take pleasure in their losses and failures ; and where their affections will be often disappointed, and driven back to their own hearts, to suffer in silence. Amid the trials and deprivations of life, they may look back some fu-

ture day, and regret that they knew too little of the value of parental love.

But they are advancing into a world, where they will not only meet with sufferings, but be exposed to vices ; and where their characters may undergo changes, much more to be feared than the necessary vicissitude of circumstances. He who is in the habit of self-examination, must, almost at any period of life, feel some distrust of himself, and be sensible of the necessity of constant watchfulness. But the characters of those of whom I speak, though they have received impressions which will remain with them in a greater or less degree through life, are as yet not hardened into any considerable firmness. They will be subjected to much severer experiments, than those by which they have yet been tried ; and who can assure us of the result ? That cheerful and open countenance, where no bad feelings have as yet left a trace of their power, may be haggard with dissipation, or bloated with intemperance. Those animated, unbroken spirits, which now compel you to sympathise with their gladness, may be lost forever ; and nothing may supply their place, but the extravagances of intoxication, and those wretched, occasional struggles to be joyous, which succeed only by making a conquest over shame and despair. Those passions, which you now regard with indifference, as merely the follies of a child, may strengthen into the vices of a man.

You may sport with them now, as with the young of some fierce animal; but if suffered to attain their full growth, they will discover their savageness and strength. That high spirit, and somewhat unmanageable temper, which might have been formed into manly resolution, may distinguish itself only by breaking through the rules of decency and morality. Those fine talents, whose first undisciplined efforts give you so much pleasure, may, in their maturity, be wasted to attain some low object of personal gratification, or employed as instruments of extensive mischief. That strong love of praise, which now renders the character so apparently docile, and seems to give you such power over it, may lead to meanness and disingenuity, and all the despicable calculations and artifices of a restless desire of distinction. The whole mind may be corrupted; and all the more generous feelings perish through its contamination.

The interest which we feel in the young should direct our attention to all those means, by which their virtue and happiness may be secured, and by which they may be saved, as far as possible, from the evils that are in the world. The worst sufferings to which they are exposed, are those which may be avoided; for they are those which we bring upon ourselves. The best preparation which we can give them, for meeting the trials, and performing the duties of life, is religious principle.

Through the influence of this only, can a ch
be formed, which will lead one to act, and suf
resist wisely and honourably in every si
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those which connect us with God, and with
It is little to say that it is the most sublime,
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about to speak upon this subject, and
those essential truths, to which the attentio
young ought to be directed.

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a being on whom the whole creation is enti
continually dependent; who is every whe
bly present, and knows all our thoughts and
from whom we receive all that we enjoy;
we must look for all that we hope; wh
constant benefactor, our Father in Heave

feelings toward him, which should be first formed and cultivated in the minds of the young, are those of gratitude, love, and reverence. In endeavouring to impress them with these sentiments toward God, we ought to take advantage of those occasions when they are most cheerful and satisfied with themselves. It is then that his idea is to be presented to their minds. Should they be touched by the beauty or sublimity of nature, we may then endeavour to give them some just conceptions of that infinite spirit, whose agency is displaying itself on every side, and of whose presence all visible forms are the marks and symbols. When we teach them something respecting the immensity of the universe; that the portion of this earth with which they are acquainted, is only a very small part of an immense globe forever wheeling through void space; that this globe is but an inconsiderable thing, compared with others that are known to us; that the stars of heaven are a multitude of suns, which cannot be numbered, placed at distances from each other, which cannot be measured; we may then direct their thoughts to that power, by whom this illimitable universe was created, and is kept in motion; and who superintends all the concerns of every individual in every one of these myriads of worlds. When we point out to them any of the admirable contrivances of nature, which appear around us in such inexhaustible profu-

sion and variety; so that we tread them without thought under our feet; when we explain to them, that each of the countless insects of a summer's day is a miracle of curious mechanism; we can hardly avoid telling them, by whose wisdom these contrivances were formed, and by whose goodness their benevolent purposes were designed. When their hearts are opened by gladness, and their feelings spread themselves out, to find objects to which to cling; you may then, by a word or two, direct their thoughts to God as their benefactor. When the occasion is of importance enough to give propriety to the introduction of religious ideas, you may lead them in their sorrows to the consolation and hope which a belief in him affords. You may thus do what is in your power, to enthrone the idea of God in their minds, so that all the thoughts and affections shall pay homage to it. You may thus do what is in your power toward forming that temper of habitual devotion, to which God is continually revealing himself in his works, and in his providence. You may thus give the first impulse to those feelings of love, reverence, and trust, which connect a good man so strongly with God, that if it were possible for him to be deprived of the belief of his existence, it would be with the same feeling of horrour, with which he would see the sun darkening and disappearing from the heavens.

With just notions of God, we should endeavour to give the young, just notions, likewise, of their own nature and prospects. We are to teach them, that they are to exist forever; that death is only an introduction to a new state of things; that this life is intended by God to discipline and prepare us for the future; that our condition in the future life will depend upon our conduct here; and that the happiness of the good hereafter will be far more uninterrupted, and far more desirable, than any which is enjoyed on earth. Sublime and important as these truths are, so important, that all other truths not connected with religion become insignificant in comparison, they may be understood even by children. There are two purposes which we are to have in view in impressing them upon their minds. One is, to influence their conduct by a regard to the sanctions of the future life. And the other is, to produce those ennobling and joyful feelings, which are the result of habitually regarding ourselves as immortal beings, formed for continual improvement, and increasing happiness.

With regard to the first of these objects;—the rewards and punishments, the good and evil of the future life, should not be represented as in their nature of mere arbitrary appointment. They should be represented as the necessary consequences of our conduct; of the same character with

those, which, under the moral government of God, follow it in this world. We should teach the young to observe the effects of their dispositions and actions, and to associate in their minds the former with the latter. We must teach them, that actions are not disconnected; that they link themselves together, and form habits, and that these habits draw us on to happiness or misery. We should endeavour to make them perceive that chain of moral causes and consequences, which sooner or later connects our condition with our character. Virtue is obedience to the will of God; and therefore it is of its nature to secure his favour; it is doing good to our fellow creatures; and therefore it is of its nature to obtain their love and respect; it is preferring in all cases a higher good to a meaner; though the former may be remote, and the latter may be present; and therefore it is our highest interest; it is the cultivation of those feelings and faculties whose objects will never be exhausted; and therefore it gives the promise of unceasing improvement. Vice, on the contrary, is a sacrifice of our taste for nobler gratifications, to a craving after those which are vile and temporary; and therefore it is a wretched miscalculation; it is doing injury to our fellow creatures; and therefore it cuts us off from their sympathy and regard; it is disobedience to God;—a preference, therefore, of the dictates of our folly to the laws of In-

finite Wisdom, and an opposition of our strength to the purposes of Omnipotence. These distinctions are essential, and will exist forever.

But, in pointing out to those whom we instruct, the natural consequences of conduct, we must teach them, that these consequences, whether good or bad, are often intercepted in this world by various accidents; and that by far the most important are those which are not experienced till we enter upon the future; that we are here, gradually, by repeated acts, forming certain characters, which will fit or unfit us for happiness hereafter; that we are acting, therefore, under a much greater responsibility than that which discovers itself in the events of this life; a responsibility which is not forced upon our notice; and which we must associate by the effort of our own minds, with all our purposes of moral conduct. The young must be instructed, that there are various paths in this world from which we may choose; and that we shall, in all probability, experience here, very sensibly, the wisdom or the folly of our choice; but that their main difference consists in the destination to which they will conduct us. When the mind has just conceptions of the intrinsick nature of right and wrong conduct, and of their necessary effects; and when an habitual association is formed between moral purposes, and a sense of future good and ill, we may then expect the sanctions of religion to act upon the character

with a constant and uniform force. They will produce their effects at all times, operating like the unseen powers of nature.

But a belief in the future life is to be established in the mind, not merely that it may govern the thoughts and conduct, but that it may bring along with it all those feelings of hope and joy, which are its proper attendants. It has then only its full efficacy, when it makes the evils of life yield before us, as immortal beings, with whom they can maintain no enduring conflict ; and when it gives to all our higher pleasures, that character of imperishable permanence, which contrasts so strongly with all that the world can offer us. We believe that we are formed for endless improvement and happiness ; and one main purpose of a religious education is, to give distinctness to the conceptions which this belief presents to the mind. It is not sufficient, that there should be a mere assent of the understanding to the naked truth, that the good will be happy in the future life ; the imagination and the feelings must be interested. We must represent the future life of the good, not as a state of passive, idle enjoyment, and some incomprehensible sort of rapture ; but as affording different kinds of happiness, suited to our different capacities. It is our main business here, to form certain characters which may fit us for happiness hereafter ; and we cannot reasonably doubt, that this happiness will be

adapted to the characters which we are here required to form ; to the habits, dispositions, tastes, and desires, which it is here our duty to cultivate. The future life, therefore, may, and ought to be represented, as a life of activity, full of vigour and joyful expectation ; a life of constant acquisition and improvement ; in which our best affections will be continually exercised, and in which our love of knowledge will be continually gratified ; a life of social intercourse and delight ; a life of devotion and gratitude.

One of the first truths respecting the future life of the good, which may be effectually presented to the imagination and feelings, is, that it will be free from the evils of the present ;—that in the language of the Apocalypse, *God shall wipe away all tears ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pain.* Another truth, most interesting to the affections, is, that we shall be united again to the friends who have gone before us. A parent, in the course of nature, will die before his child. This is a fact, to which you may direct the minds of your children, and by which, if they have any sensibility, they will be deeply affected ; and they will thus be prepared to receive, with the strong grasp of their best affections, the hope which you may then give them of meeting you again in a far better world.

I have spoken of the essential truths of re
considered independently of their evidence
our assurance in the belief of these truths,
indebted to Christianity ; and it is under this
that Christianity is to be exhibited to the m
those to whom we give religious instruction
believe what we are most interested to know
firm faith and joyful hope, because it has been
us upon the authority of God ; because it ha
taught us by God ; for *the word which y*
said our Saviour, *is not mine, but the Father*
*sent me.* Creatures of yesterday, just enter
a universe, whose extent seems boundless,
whose past duration we are wholly ignora
look round for something to inform us con
our relations and prospects. Our reason
abroad to examine the appearances which
themselves ; and returns humbled, perplex
almost silent. When she would raise her v
is drowned in the babble and clamour of our
faculties. Whatever she might have done,
full vigour had been exerted and unimpeded
if we look to the most enlightened period
the introduction of Christianity, we shall fi
she had in fact taught but little, and that
but very few. The philosopher might wait i
but doubtful expectation, for the uncertain
which impended over him, his speculation
times kindling into transient rapture ; but th

mass of men became unresisting slaves of their imaginations and senses. They looked up to heaven; and peopled it with beings like themselves. They cast their eyes upon the world; and regarded it as their only scene of existence. They were insensible to all that is possible or probable in the interminable futurity beyond. They saw nothing there, but, it may be, some shapes of poetick fiction, which had as little influence upon their common purposes and feelings, as the dreams of midnight. But God has had mercy upon his ignorant and erring children; and has himself made known to us, why we are here, and on whom we depend, what we are to do, and what we are to expect. He, who from the history of man, and his own experience, best knows the strength and weakness of our reason, the ground it may occupy, and the obstacles it must encounter, will feel with the strongest conviction, the necessity of revelation to give assurance to his religious belief. He will most gladly rest his faith upon the authority of God. Without the evidence of revelation, some imperfect and doubtful notions of religion might have been the luxury of a few; with it, the truths of religion are the daily bread, and common support of millions. It is that evidence, on which only the wisest rely with confidence for a most important part of their religious belief; and it is the only evidence applicable to the minds of the great majority of men.





Without it, real religion would scarce have an existence in the world.

We are then to teach the young, that Jesus Christ was a messenger from GOD, who gave the most decisive proof of this fact by the miracles which he performed; and who spake under the direction, and with the authority of the Almighty. We must inform them, that he taught those truths, which are our support, our joy, and our glory; that he made known to us our Father who is in Heaven; that he brought life and immortality to light; and that in connexion with this, he taught us a truth which concerns us beyond comparison more than any thing else, *that all they who are in their graves shall hear the voice of* GOD, *and shall come forth; they who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

But it is not only in this point of view, that Christianity is to be presented to the minds of those whom we would instruct. It is, without express reference to the truths which it teaches, a most striking manifestation of the goodness of GOD. That Being, of whom we know at once so much, and so little; of whom we know nothing more certainly, than that we are entirely at his disposal; that infinite and incomprehensible Being has instructed his creatures of this earth, not merely by the signs and voices of visible nature, whose import so few were able to interpret, but by a direct and most in-

telligible communication. Christianity, considered as a direct revelation from God, is a very mysterious and most solemn display of the divine benevolence. The veil which hides the Invisible from his universe, has been, as it were, partially raised for us; and the ineffable glory of God has broken forth in beams of mercy and love. The past history of our race, and all that now surrounds us, assume a different character, when we believe that the Creator has had direct communication with his creatures; and that, even from the beginning, he has manifested a special superintendence over their concerns. The history of man is connected with the operations of God. It is no longer a melancholy record of inexplicable events, to be referred only to human agency. The world becomes a holy place. The truths of religion, presented in this new form, appear with a distinctness, and a character of reality, which they had not before; the narrow circle, within which sensible objects confine us, is broken; and the mind, ennobled and invigorated, rises from earth, to embrace those sublime conceptions, which before, it was unable to grasp.

But we are further to teach the young, that Christianity is a subject of high interest, on account of the exhibition of moral excellence, which appeared in Jesus Christ, and in some of his first disciples. The power of making a discriminating estimate of moral qualities, is indeed one of slow formation; and we can hardly expect the young to





receive a full impression of the supernatural grandeur of character, displayed by the Saviour of the world, and by those who were worthy to be reckoned among his followers. But because this power is of slow formation, it is more necessary to commence its cultivation early; and in speaking of Jesus Christ, we are to endeavour to give those whom we instruct, some conception of the moral sublimity discovered in his complete devotion to the service of GOD, in his perfect superiority over all selfish motives, in his entire sacrifice of all the meaner passions, and in that steady and irresistible benevolence, which carried him forward in the service of man, without his turning aside for a moment on account of opposition, or insult, or terrible suffering, to the completion of the highest purpose ever effected upon earth. There was a duty laid upon him, such as no other being in this world ever had to perform; and he performed it thoroughly. In the various situations by which his virtue was tried, and which were so adapted to lay bare the mind, he discovered none of those infirmities which have clung to the best and wisest. And they who were with him, felt the influence of his spirit; and were raised by it to such high moral superiority, as to leave behind them characters worthy to be consecrated by the veneration of mankind.

With Christianity, the Jewish dispensation is inseparably connected; and the different works which compose the records of both are contained

in the Bible. In the common version of the Bible, many difficulties, and many obscure passages present themselves to a large proportion of readers. Much might be done, by introducing the use of a more correct translation, and by popular commentaries, to remove this obscurity, and these difficulties. It is not a little to be lamented that more is not done; that while we are so solicitous to circulate the Scriptures, we do not discover a little more solicitude to have them correctly understood; that we look on with indifference, and suffer them to make their way, as they can, to the understandings, and hearts of men, disguised by a very faulty translation, encumbered with difficulties, and exposed to objections. It is to be hoped, that there will be much more sensibility upon this subject. But in the mean time, some general principles may be laid down, which will afford a solution of many difficulties, and will partly explain the origin of those that remain. In the first place then, while we believe that God gave the Jews the knowledge of himself, and taught them some of the great truths of religion, by a miraculous revelation, and miraculously superintended their concerns; we at the same time believe, that the records of their history were composed by men. We must, therefore, warn those whom we instruct, from attributing to God, the human passions, the imperfect views, the na-

tional prejudices, and the false moral judgments of actions and character, which belong only to the historian. We must bring to their recollection that they are reading the history of remote ages,—a history, which reaching through a period of many centuries, terminates just about the time, when Socrates was beginning to teach morals and manners to the heathen world. It is the history of a rude and almost uncivilized people; and we are not to expect to find a very high standard of morals existing among such a people, or very accurate and comprehensive notions of duty generally prevailing. We believe that God made to his ministers under the Jewish dispensation, most sublime communications respecting his nature and works; but that the language in which these truths were expressed by them, was their own; that it was accommodated to their own previous habits of conception, and those of the people whom they were commmissioned to instruct; and that this was a people whose intellectual powers had been but little exercised, whose sphere of thought was very contracted, and to whom it was necessary, of consequence, to present abstract ideas clothed in sensible images of a kind with which their minds were familiar. Splendid and magnificent, therefore, as is much of the poetry of the Jewish Scriptures, there is much of it, at the same time, which is adapted to minds very differently modified from

our own. We may further, I think, rationally teach, that many of the particular laws of the founder of the Jewish state, are attributed to Jehovah, only because Moses was appointed and commissioned by God, as the lawgiver of that state, and might therefore be considered as acting throughout under his authority. We must in general warn those whom we are educating, from confounding in their minds the great truths, and most important purposes of the Jewish revelation, with the errours and vices of those to whom it was addressed. In travelling through a barren and rugged country, we must not lay blame upon the pure light of heaven for the objects on which it shines, and the scenes which it discovers to our view.

With regard to the New Testament, we must teach them, that much was necessarily said by our Saviour, and his apostles, which had a local and temporary reference, and is not *directly* applicable to all individuals in all times;—that the epistles were *letters*, in the common sense of the word, addressed to particular churches and individuals;—that the composition of these different letters was occasioned, in each particular case, by some existing state of things not of a permanent nature;—and that, therefore, while they express and imply the essential truths of our religion, they at the same time contain much which had immediate relation to opinions and feelings that are no longer

in existence, and to controversies which are altogether obsolete.

It may be observed generally, that we are not to sit down to ancient writings, as if they were compositions of yesterday, and expect to find every thing accommodated to our habits of thinking, and the knowledge which we may happen to have acquired. There is an obscurity hangs over them, part of which cannot be dispelled. In order to understand them, as far as we are able, it is often necessary to be acquainted with manners and customs quite unlike our own, with modifications of intellectual and moral character, of which we have had no experience, with the meaning of forms of expression, with which we are not familiar, and with many particular facts, to be learnt only by patient inquiry. But the writings of the New Testament are ancient writings; and the last book of the Old Testament, though a thousand years later than the first, is still among a very few of the oldest works which remain to us. The writings of Moses precede, by an interval of several centuries, the earliest monument of profane literature, the poems of Homer. It would be wonderful indeed, therefore, if we did not find many difficulties, and many obscure passages in the sacred books; if writings which have been exposed so long to the injuries of time, had not in many places become defaced and illegible. It may be ob-

served particularly with regard to the Jewish Scriptures, that they are the memorials and remains of a very ancient dispensation of God, the use of which has long since ceased; and much of the knowledge concerning which, has fallen into irrecoverable ruin. Vast pillars, and broken arches appear, sufficient to give us some notion of the structure, but not to enable us to form an exact plan of the whole, or to determine the uses and relations of all its particular parts.

I have thus endeavoured to point out some of the main objects of a religious education. It is quite evident, that he who wishes to make his children religious, must be religious himself. You cannot explain subjects on which you have not thought; you cannot give efficacy to truths which you do not feel; you cannot inspire hopes by which you are not animated; and it will be in vain for you to inculcate motives from which you do not act. Direct instruction is but a part of a religious education. The influence which you indirectly exert upon the minds of your children, is of more importance still. There has been little yet to withdraw them from the sphere of your attraction; and they will revolve round, and accompany you, in whatever path you are borne along. You are educating them, not so much by particular lessons of instruction, indispensable as these are, as by your daily conversation, the feelings and sentiments which you habitually

express, the motives from which you act, and appear to act; the whole power of your example, the whole influence of your character.

In giving them a religious education, you will have conferred upon them the greatest blessing, which one human being can confer upon another. You will have laid them under obligations, which will never be burdensome, though they can never be repaid; but the memory and feeling of which will be an inseparable part of their minds. You will have connected them to yourselves by living bonds of affection, which cannot be loosened or snapt asunder. You will have planted and watered high principles, and honourable feelings; and if they should flourish and bear fruit, there is none to whom their best fruits will be offered more gladly. You will have blended the thought of yourself with all that is most excellent in their characters, and placed your image in the sanctuary of their affections. There is no favour, which he who has lived long enough to know its value, will remember with such unremitted gratitude. Amid all the changes to which we are exposed in life, whatever other affections may be broken down, or decay around it, this feeling will remain, imperishable and unaltered.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS,

There is much I have been saying, which, even if I may have retained your attention, you can hardly have been able fully to comprehend. I

have rather been speaking for you, than to you. Yet I should be very unwilling to take leave of you, without some expression of the interest, which your appearance and performances have excited. We wish you to be happy; we wish you, therefore, to be virtuous. There is but one course of conduct which is wise, but one which is honourable, but one which leads to certain and permanent happiness. This can be attained only by forming and keeping the resolution to do your duty. When it is settled what that is, never propose any other question to your minds. May you habitually think of God, as your father, and of yourselves, as immortal beings. May you become sincere disciples of Jesus Christ. There is no higher character upon earth. There is no better wish which we can form for you.

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# STATEMENT OF REASO

FOR NOT BELIEVING THE

DOCTRINES OF TRINITA
OF GOD, AND T

Professor Stuart's o Mr. Channing.

Andrews Norton.

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NOTE.

*The following Statement of Reasons, was originally written for an article in the Theological Review of the Christian Disciple. A few verbal alterations have been made to accommodate it to its present form of publication.*

# STATEMENT.

INSTEAD of confining our attention exclusively to Professor Stuart's letters, we have thought that it would be more useful and more satisfactory to our readers, to give a general view of the subject in controversy, with the reasons for our own opinions, without particular reference to his work. A direct reply to his letters must be occupied, in great part, in pointing out errors, inconsistences, and rash and unfounded assertions. All this would serve to distract our attention, and that of our readers, from the real question at issue, to one of very minor importance, the character of Professor Stuart's pamphlet. In the general view which we intend, we shall give a virtual answer at least, or what we regard as an answer, to his statements and arguments, in common with those of other Trinitarians. We propose, then, in the following pages, to state what are the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians respecting the nature of God, and the person of Jesus Christ, and our reasons for not believing these doctrines; and to explain our opinions respecting those passages in scripture, which are urged in their support.

The proper modern doctrine of the Trinity, as it is stated in the creeds of latter times, is, that there are three persons in the Divinity, who equally possess all divine attributes; and this doctrine is at the same time connected with an explicit

statement that there is but one God. Now we do not believe this doctrine, because taken in connexion with that of the unity of God, it is a doctrine essentially incredible; one, which no man who has compared the two doctrines together with just conceptions of both, ever did, or ever could believe. Three persons, each equally possessing divine attributes, are three Gods. A person is a being. No one who has any correct notion of the meaning of words will deny this. And the being who possesses divine attributes must be God or a God. The doctrine of the Trinity, then, affirms that there are three Gods. It is affirmed at the same time, that there is but one God. But nobody can believe that there are three Gods, and that there is but one God.

This statement is as plain and obvious as any which can be made. But it certainly is not the less forcible, because it is perfectly plain and obvious. Some Trinitarians have indeed remonstrated against our charging those who hold the doctrine with the "ABSURDITIES consequent upon the language of their creed." We do not answer to this, that if men will talk absurdity, and insist that they are teaching truths of infinite importance, it is unreasonable for them to expect to be understood as meaning something entirely different from what their words express. The true answer is, that these complaints are wholly unfounded, and that the proper doctrine of the Trinity, as it has existed in latter times, is that which is expressed by the language which we have used, taken in its obvious acceptation. There is no reasonable pretence for saying, that *the great body of Trinitarians*, when they have used the word, *person*, have not meant to express proper personality. He who asserts the contrary, asserts a mere extravagance. He closes his eyes upon an obvious fact, and then affirms what he may fancy ought to have been, instead of what there is no doubt really has been. But on this subject we have something more to say, and we shall proceed in a moment to remark particularly, not only upon this, but upon the other evasions which have been resorted to, in order to escape the force of the statement which we have urged.

We wish, however, first to observe, that the ancient doctrine of the Trinity, as it existed before the council of Nice (A.D. 325) was VERY DIFFERENT from the modern, and has this great advantage over the latter, that when viewed in connexion with the unity of God, it is not *essentially* incredible. The orthodox doctrine, previous to the period just mentioned, taught that the Father alone was the Supreme God; and that

the Son and Spirit were distinct beings, deriving their existence from him, and far inferior; each of whom, however, or at least the former, might, in a certain sense, be called God. The subject has been so thoroughly examined, that the correctness of this statement will not, we think, be questioned at the present day by any respectable writer. The theological student, who wishes to see in a small compass the authorities on which it is founded, may consult one or more of the works mentioned in the note below.* We have stated that form of the doctrine which approached nearest to modern orthodoxy. But the subject of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, it may be particularly observed, was in a very unsettled state before the council of Constantinople, A.D. 381. Gregory Nazianzen, in his eulogy of Athanasius, has the following passage respecting that great father of Trinitarian orthodoxy. "For when all others who held our doctrine were divided into three classes, the faith of many being unsound respecting the Son, that of still more concerning the Holy Spirit (on which subject to be least impious was thought to be piety) and a small number being sound in both respects; he first and alone, or with a very few, dared to confess in writing, clearly and explicitly, the true doctrine of the one Godhead and nature of the three persons. Thus that truth, a knowledge of which, as far as regards the Son, had been vouchsafed to many of the fathers before, he was finally inspired to maintain in respect to the Holy Spirit."†

So much for the original doctrine of the Trinity. We shall now proceed to state the different forms, which the modern doctrine has been made to assume, and in which its language has been explained, by those who have attempted to conceal or remove the direct opposition between this and the doctrine of the unity of God.

1. Many Trinitarian writers have maintained a modification of the doctrine, *in some respects similar* to what we have just stated to be its most ancient form. They have considered the Father as the "fountain of the divinity," who alone is supreme, and whose existence is underived, and have regarded the Son and Spirit as deriving their existence from him and subordinate

* Petavii Dogmata Theologica, Tom. II. de Trinitate; *particularly* Lib. I. capp. 3, 4, 5.—Huetii Origeniana Lib. II cap. 2. quæst. 2.—Jackson's edition of Novatian, with his annotations.—Whitby Disquisitiones Modestæ in Cl. Bulli Defensionem Fidei Nicænæ.—Priestley's History of Early Opinions, vol. 2.—General Repository and Review, vol. 3. p. 24. seqq.

† Orat. 21. Op. Tom. I. p. 394.

to him; but, at the same time, as equally with the Fath
sessing all divine attributes. With regard to this
of the doctrine, it is an obvious remark, that the exist
the Son, and Spirit, is either *necessary*, or it is *not*.
existence be necessary, we have then three beings *nece*
*existing*, each possessing divine attributes, and conse
we have three Gods. If it be not necessary, but dep
on the will of the Father, then we say that the dist
infinite between underived and independent existen
derived and dependent; between the supremacy of G
Father, and the subordination of beings who exist only
his will. In the latter view of the doctrine, therefo
clearly have but one God; but at the same time the
doctrine of the Trinity disappears. The form of sta
too, just mentioned, must be abandoned; for it can ha
pretended that these derived and dependent beings pos
equality in divine attributes, or are equal in nature
Father. Beings, whose existence is dependent on the
another, cannot be equal in power to the being on who
are dependent. The doctrine, therefore, however di
by the mode of statement which we are considering, n
fact, resolve itself into an assertion of three Gods; o
on the other hand, amount to nothing more than a form
tarianism. In the latter case, however objectionable a
founded we may think it, it is not to our present pur
argue against it; and in the former case, it is pressed
the difficulties which bear upon the doctrine as con
stated, and at the same time with new difficulties, whic
this particular form of statement. That the Son and the
should exist necessarily, as well as the Father, and
equally with the Father all divine attributes, and yet be
dinate and inferior to the Father; or in other words, tha
should be two beings or persons, each of whom is proper
in the highest sense God, and yet that these two be
persons should be subordinate and inferior to another b
person, who is God, is as incredible a proposition as t
trine can involve.

II. Others again, who have chosen to call then
Trinitarians, profess to understand by the word, *person*
thing very different from what it commonly expresse
regard it as denoting neither any *proper personality*,
*real distinction* in the divine nature. They use the
a sense equivalent to that which the Latin word *person*
monly signifies in classic writers; or which we usually

by the word, *character*. According to them, the Deity considered as existing in three different persons, is the Deity considered as sustaining three different characters. Thus some of them regard the three persons as denoting *the three relations* which he bears to men, as their Creator, (the Father,) their Redeemer, (the Son,) and their sanctifier, (the Holy Spirit.) Others found the distinction maintained in the doctrine on three attributes of God, as his goodness, wisdom, and power. Those who explain the Trinity in this manner are called *modal* or *nominal* Trinitarians. Their doctrine, as every one must perceive, is nothing more than simple Unitarianism disguised, if it may be said to be disguised, by a very improper use of language. Yet this doctrine, or rather a heterogeneous mixture of opinions in which this doctrine has predominated, has been, at times, considerably prevalent, and has almost come in competition with the proper doctrine.

III. But there are others, who maintain with those last mentioned, that in the terms employed in stating the doctrine of the Trinity, the word, *person*, is not to be taken in its usual acceptation; but who differ from them in maintaining that these terms ought to be understood as affirming a real threefold distinction in the Godhead. But this is nothing more than a mere evasion introduced into the general statement of the doctrine, for the purpose of rescuing it from the charge of absurdity, to which those who thus express themselves, allow that it would be liable, if the language in which it is usually expressed, were to be understood in its common acceptation. They themselves, however, after giving this general statement, immediately relapse into the common belief. When they speak particularly of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit, they speak of them unequivocally as persons in the proper sense of the word. They attribute to them *personal* attributes. They speak of each as sustaining *personal* relations peculiar to himself, and performing *personal* actions, perfectly distinct from those of either of the others. It was the Son who was SANCTIFIED, and SENT into the world; and the Father by whom he was sanctified and sent. It was the Son who became incarnate, and not the Father. It was the Son who made atonement for the sins of men, and the Father by whom the atonement was received. The Son was in the bosom of the Father, but the Father was not in the bosom of the Son. The Son was the Logos who was with God, but it would sound harsh to say, that the Father was with God. The Son was the first born of every creature, the image of the Invisible God, and

did not desire to retain his equality with [likeness to]
There is no one who would not be shocked at the thou
applying this language to the Father. Again, it was the
Spirit who was sent as the Comforter to our Lord's apo
after his ascension, and not the Father nor the Son. Al
those who maintain the doctrine of three distinctions, bu
of three persons, in the divine nature, must and do sa
allow; and therefore they do in fact maintain, with
Trinitarians, that there are three divine persons, in the p
sense of the word, distinguished from each other. Their
of statement has been adopted merely with a view of avo
those obvious objections which overwhelm the doctri
commonly expressed; and without any regard to its c
tency with their real opinions, or with indisputable an
knowledged truths. The God and Father of our Lord
Christ is an intelligent being, a person. There may
something like irreverence in the very statement of this
but in reasoning respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, w
obliged to state even such truths as this. The Son of
an intelligent being, a person. And no Christian, one
think, who reflects a moment upon his own belief, can
that these two persons are perfectly distinct from each
Neither of them, therefore, is a mere distinction of the
nature; or the same intelligent being regarded under di
distinctions. Let us consider for a moment what sort of
ing would be forced upon the language of scripture, if,
the Father, and the Son of God are mentioned, you w
substitute the terms, "the first distinction in the Tri
and "the second distinction in the Trinity," or, "Go
sidered in the first distinction of his nature," and "Go
sidered in the second distinction of his nature." We w
produce any examples, because it would appear to u
much like turning the scriptures into burlesque.

If you prove that the person, who is called the son o
possesses divine attributes, you prove that there is
divine person beside the Father. In order to compl
Trinity, you must proceed to prove, *first*, THE PERSON
and then the divinity, of the Holy Spirit. This is th
way in which the doctrine can be established. No
pretend that there is any passage in the scriptures, in w
is expressly taught, that there is a threefold distinction
sort in the divine nature. He who proves the doctrine
Trinity from the scriptures, must do it by showing th
are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

who are respectively mentioned in the scriptures, as each possessing divine attributes. There is no other medium of proof. There is no other way in which the doctrine can be established. Of course it is the very method of proof to which, in common with other Trinitarians, those resort, who maintain that form of stating the doctrine which we are considering. It follows from this, that their real opinions must be in fact the same with those of other Trinitarians. Indeed to express our own view of the subject, the whole statement appears to us to be little more than a mere oversight, a mistake, into which some have fallen in their haste to escape from the objections which they have perceived might be urged against the common form of the doctrine.

The remarks, which we have made, appear to us plain, and such as may be easily understood by every reader. We have doubted, therefore, whether to add another, the force of which may not be at once perceived, except by those who are a little familiar with metaphysical studies. But as it seems to us to show decisively, that the statement which we are considering is untenable by any proper Trinitarian, we have thought, on the whole, that it might be worth while to subjoin it. In regard to the personality of the divine nature, the only question is, whether there are three persons, or whether there is but one person. Those with whom we are arguing, deny that there are three persons. Consequently they must maintain that there is but one person. They affirm, however, that there is a threefold distinction in the divine nature; that is, in the nature of this one person. But of the nature of any being, we can know nothing but by the attributes or properties of that being. We conceive that this is, at the present day, a fundamental and undisputed principle in metaphysics. Abstract all the attributes or properties of any being, and nothing remains of which you can form even an imagination. These are all which is cognizable by the human mind. When you say, therefore, that there is a threefold distinction in the nature of any being, the only meaning which the words will admit (in relation to the present subject) is, that the attributes or properties of this being may be divided into three distinct classes, which may be considered separately from each other. All, therefore, which is affirmed by the statement of those whom we are opposing is, that the attributes of that ONE PERSON who is God, may be divided into three distinct classes; or in other words, that God may be viewed in three different aspects in relation to his attributes. But this is nothing more than a *modal* or *nominal* Trinity, as we have before explained

these terms. Those, therefore, whose opinions we are considering, we conceive to be *nominal* Trinitarians in statement of the doctrine, and *real* Trinitarians in their b to hold the true doctrine with an implicit acknowledg in the very statement which they have adopted, tha true doctrine is untenable; and to have involved them therefore in new difficulties, without having effected any e from those with which they were pressed before.

IV. But a very considerable proportion of Trinita and some of them among the most eminent, have not s from understanding the doctrine as affirming the existe *three equal divine minds*, and consequently, to all co apprehension, of three Gods; and, at the same time, deci rejecting the doctrine of the unity of God, in that sense is at once the popular and philosophical sense of the All the unity for which they contend, is only such a result from these three divinities being inseparably conj and having a mutual consciousness, or a mutual in- which last mode of existence is again expressed in the la of technical theology by the terms *perichoresis* or *cir cession*. "To say," says Dr. William Sherlock, "tha are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite is both heresy and nonsense."* "The distinction of p cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by t tinction between three men; for [the] Father, Son, an Ghost, are as really distinct persons as Peter, Jame John."† "We must allow the Divine persons to b substantial beings."‡ There are few names of higher rity among Calvinists than that of Howe. The mode plaining the doctrine to which he was inclined, is well He was disposed to regard the three divine persons, a "distinct, individual, necessarily existing, spiritual b who formed together "the most delicious society."§

* Dr. William Sherlock's Vindication of the Doctrine of the 1690, p. 66.

† Ibid. p. 105. ‡ Ibid. p

§ Howe's Calm Discourse of the Trinity in the Godhead. Worl p. 537 seqq. particularly pp. 549, 550. This notion of Howe w tained by the Rev. Dr. S. Worcester in his controversy with N ning; which controversy, though it attracted some attention at Professor Stuart seems to have entirely forgotten, when he say Channing—"After all; the statement which you exhibit of ou very far from that which we, (or, at least, *all Trinitarians with w acquainted*,) make of our belief." p. 17. And again: "Most neither the Nicene Fathers, nor *any intelligent* Trinitarian, *cou*

who give such accounts of the doctrine as we have just stated, may at least claim the merit of having rendered their own opinions in some degree consistent with each other. They have succeeded, at a dear purchase to be sure, in freeing their creed from intrinsic absurdity, and have produced a doctrine to which there is no decisive objection, except that it contradicts the most explicit declarations of scripture, and the first principles of natural religion, and is therefore irreconcilable with all which God has in any way taught us of himself.

Subsequent to the council of Nice, that which we have last considered, became gradually the prevailing form of the doctrine, except that it was not very clearly settled in what the divine unity consisted. The comparison of the three persons in the Trinity to three different men, was borrowed by Sherlock from the fathers of the fourth century. Gregory Nazianzen, who himself maintained zealously this form of orthodoxy, says, that "those who were too orthodox fell into polytheism," i. e. tritheism. It might have been difficult to determine the precise distance from tritheism of those who were not *too* orthodox.

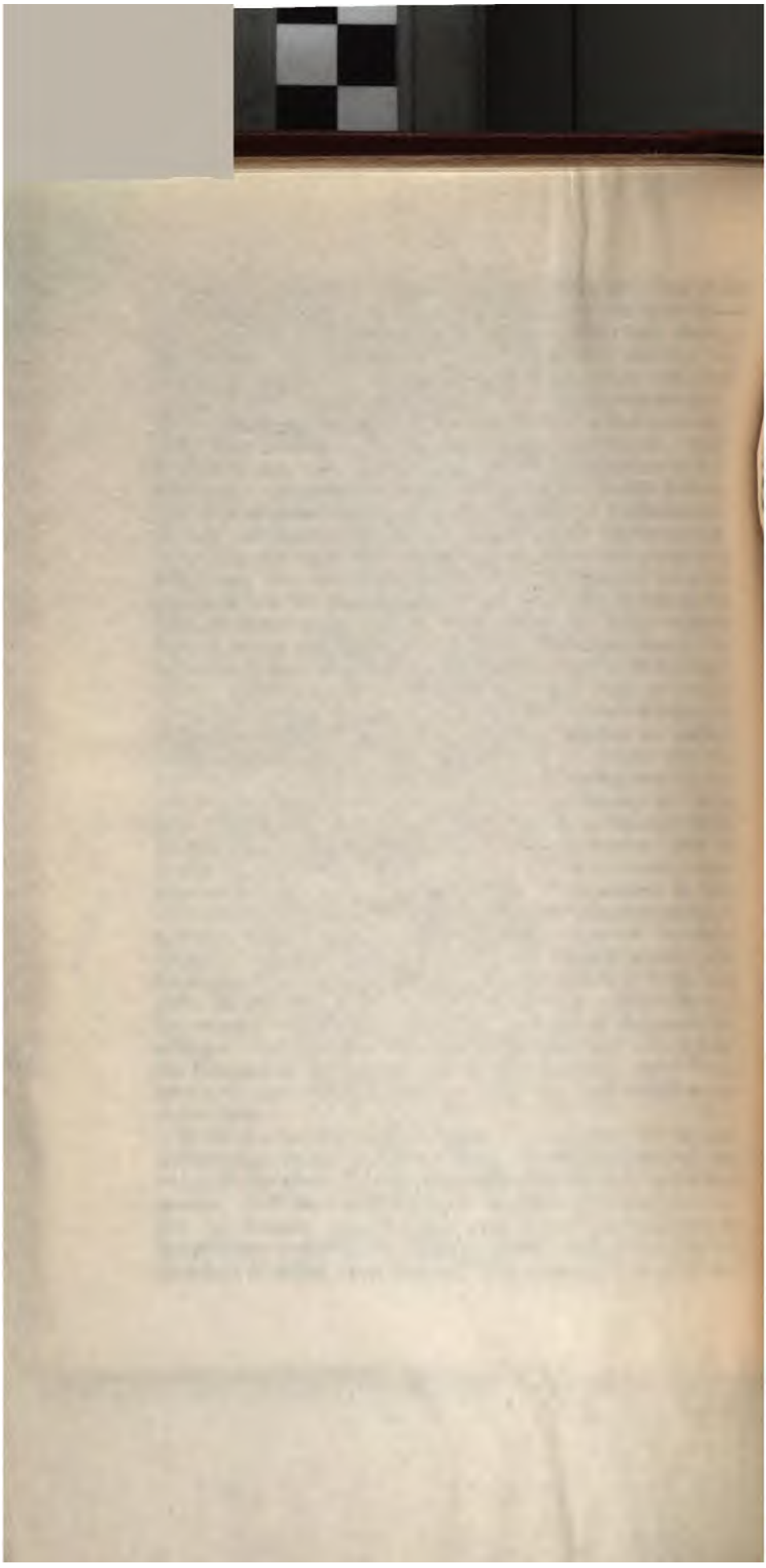
This then is the state of the case. The proper modern doctrine of the Trinity is, when viewed in connexion with that of the unity, a doctrine essentially incredible. In endeavouring to present it in a form in which it may be defended, *one class of Trinitarians* insist strongly upon the supremacy of the Father, and the subordination of the Son and the Spirit. These, on the one hand, must either affirm this distinction in such a manner as really to maintain only a very untenable form of Unitarianism; or, on the other hand, must in fact retain the common doctrine, incumbered with the new and peculiar difficulty, which results from declaring that the Son and Spirit are each properly God, but that each is a subordinate God. *Another class*, the nominal Trinitarians, explain away the doctrine entirely, and leave us nothing with which to contend, but a very unjustifiable use of language. *A third class*, those who maintain three distinctions, and deny three persons, have merely put a forced meaning upon the terms used in its statement; and have then gone on to reason and to write, in a manner which necessarily supposes that these terms are used correctly; and that the common form of the doctrine, which they profess to reject, is really that in which they themselves receive it. And *a fourth class* have fallen into plain and bald

term person in such a latitude as you represent us as doing, and as you attach to it." p. 22. But Professor Stuart's assertions on this subject are, many of them, of a character sufficiently remarkable.

tritheism, maintaining the unity, only by maintaining tha
three Gods of whom they speak are inseparably and most
mately united. To these we may add, as *a fifth class*, t
who receive the common doctrine, without any attem
modify or explain it. All the sects of Trinitarians fall
one or another of the five classes which we have menti
Now we may put the nominal Trinitarians out of the que
They have nothing to do with the present controversy.
if there be any, who, calling themselves Trinitarians, do i
hold such a subordination of the Son and Spirit to the F
that their doctrine amounts only to one form of Unitaria
we may put these out of the question likewise. After h
done this, we think that it will appear from our prec
statements, that the whole body of real Trinitarians m
separated into two great divisions; viz. those who, in con
with the divine unity, hold the proper doctrine, either w
without certain modifications,—which modifications, thou
tended to lessen, would really, if possible, add to its in
bility; and those, who, maintaining the unity only in
are in fact proper believers in three Gods. Now we
adopt the doctrine of those first mentioned, because we
believe what appears to us a contradiction in terms; n
doctrine of those last mentioned, because revelation and
teach us that there is but one God. If there be any or
does not acquiesce in the conclusion to which we have a
we beg him to read over again what we have written,
satisfy himself, either that there is, or that there is not
error in our statements and reasonings. The subject
one with which we are at liberty to trifle, and arbitrarily
opinions without reason. Our opponents represent th
trine as of immense importance. We, too, think it of in
importance that the doctrine should be discarded, if it
true; for we think that it has been a reproach and sca
the religion of Christians; that it has been one of the p
of those errors which have obscured the truth, and inte
the influence of the gospel, and which, therefore, hav
among the most efficient causes of infidelity, and indif
to our faith.

With the doctrine of the Trinity, is connected that
HYPOSTATIC UNION (as it is called,) or *the doctrine*
*union of the divine and human natures in Christ, in*
*manner that these two natures constitute but one*
But this doctrine may be almost said to have preemin
incredibility to that of the Trinity itself. The latter
no object of belief when regarded in common with tha





Divine Unity; for, from these two doctrines, propositions result which directly contradict each other. But the former, without reference to any other doctrine, does in itself, as it seems to us, involve propositions as clearly self-contradictory as any which it is in the power of language to express. It teaches that Christ is both God and man. The proposition is very plain and intelligible. The words, *God* and *man*, are among those which are in most common use, and whose meaning is best defined and understood. There cannot, (as with regard to the terms employed in stating the doctrine of the Trinity,) be any controversy about the sense in which they are used in this proposition, or, in other words, about the ideas which they are intended to express. And we perceive that these ideas are perfectly incompatible with each other. Our idea of God is of an infinite being; our idea of man is of a finite being; and we perceive that the same being cannot be both infinite and finite. We do not know what there is, which is clear in language, or what proposition of any sort, can be affirmed to be true, if we cannot affirm this to be true,—that it is impossible that the same being should be finite and infinite; or, in other words, that it is impossible that the same being should be man and God. To express our own view of the subject, we must say, that if the language we are considering were not so familiar, we believe that there is scarcely any one who would not revolt from the doctrine, as shocking every proper feeling of reverence toward God, and who would not, at the same time, regard it as being as mere an absurdity as can be presented to the understanding. We can conceive of nothing more unmeaning, *so far as it is intended to convey any proposition which the mind is capable of receiving*, than such language as we sometimes find used, in which Christ is declared to be at once the Creator of the universe, and a man of sorrows; God omniscient and omnipotent, and a feeble man of imperfect knowledge.* Yet it is pretended, that this sort of language may be justified from the scriptures.

We know of no way in which the force of the statement just urged can appear to be evaded, except by a sort of analogy, which has been instituted between the double nature of Christ, as it is called, and the complex constitution of man, as consisting of soul and body. It has been said or implied, that the doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures in

* See Professor Stuart's Letters, p. 48.

Christ does not involve propositions more self-contradictory, than those which result from the complex constitution of man;—that we may, for instance, affirm of man, that he is mortal, and that he is immortal; or of a particular individual, that he is dead, and that he is living: (meaning by the latter term, that he is existing in the world of spirits.) The obvious answer is, that there is no analogy between these propositions and those on which we have remarked. The last mentioned propositions belong to a very numerous class, comprehending all those in which the same term is at once affirmed and denied of the same subject, *the term being used in different senses;* or in which, terms, apparently opposite, are both affirmed of the same subject, *the terms being used in senses not really opposed to each other.* When I say that man is mortal, I mean that his present life will terminate; when I say that he is immortal, I mean, that his existence will not terminate. I use the words in senses not opposed, and bring together no ideas which are incompatible with each other. The second proposition just mentioned is of the same character with the first, and admits, as every one will perceive, of a similar explanation. In order to constitute any analogy between propositions of this sort and those before stated, our opponents must say, that when they affirm that Christ is finite and not finite, omniscient, and not omniscient, they mean to use the words finite and omniscient in different senses in the two parts of each proposition. But this they will not say; nor do the words admit of more than one sense.

A being of a complex constitution like man, is not a being of a double nature. The very term *double nature*, when one professes to use it in a strict, philosophical sense, seems to us to imply an absurdity. The nature of a being is ALL that which constitutes it to be what it is; and when one speaks of a double nature, it appears to us to be the same sort of language, as if he were to speak of a double individuality. With regard to a being of a *complex constitution*, we may, undoubtedly, affirm that of a part of this constitution which is not true of the whole being; as we may affirm of the body of man that it does not think, though we cannot affirm this of man;—or, on the other hand, we may affirm of the being itself what is not true of a part of its constitution, as by reversing the example just given. This is the whole truth relating to the subject. Of a being of a complex constitution, it is as much an absurdity to affirm contradictory propositions as of any other being.

According to those who maintain the doctrine of the two natures in Christ, Christ speaks of himself, and is spoken of by

his apostles, sometimes as man, sometimes as God, and sometimes as both God and man. He speaks, and is spoken of, under these different characters promiscuously, without any explanation, and without its being any where declared, that he existed in these different conditions of being. He prays to that being, whom he himself was. He declares himself to be ignorant of what (being God) he knew, and unable to perform what (being God) he could perform. He affirms that he could do nothing of himself, or by his own power, though he was omnipotent. He, the Supreme God, prays for the glory which he had with God, and declares that another is greater than himself. In one of the passages QUOTED IN PROOF OF HIS DIVINITY, he is called the first born of every creature; in another of these passages, the Supreme God is said to have been anointed by God with the oil of gladness above his fellows; and in a third of them, it is affirmed that he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. If our readers are shocked by the combinations which we have brought together, we beg them to do us the justice to believe that our feelings are the same with their own. But these combinations necessarily result from the doctrine which we are considering. We might go on to fill page after page with inconsistencies as gross and as glaring. The doctrine has turned the scriptures, as far as they relate to this subject, into a book of riddles, and, what is worse, of riddles which admit of no solution. We willingly refrain from the use of that stronger language, which will occur to many of our readers. And this monstrous doctrine is introduced under the pretence of rendering the scriptures clear and consistent.

We do not then believe the doctrine of the Trinity, nor that of the union of two natures in Christ, because they are doctrines, which, when fairly understood, it is impossible from the nature of the human mind we should believe. They involve, as it seems to us, manifest contradictions, and no man can believe what he perceives to be a contradiction.

We are sometimes accused of opposing reason to revelation, of canvassing and questioning what God has clearly revealed. The charge is utterly unfounded. We are accused of questioning what God has clearly revealed! The charge is not one of depravity, for it is not in human nature to be guilty of impiety of this sort; but it is a charge of mere insanity or idiocy. "When it is God who speaks," says Calvin, "all agree that there is no man of such deplorable audacity, unless indeed he be destitute of common sense, and of humanity itself, as to refuse credit to the speaker." To doctrines which

those who hold them contend make a part of God's revelation, we oppose the true revelation from God, contained in the scriptures, which teaches his Unity, and which teaches that Christ is a distinct being, not God, and consequently, as every other being must be, infinitely inferior to God. In what we have already said we have not been bringing arguments to disprove the doctrines; we have merely been showing that they are intrinsically incapable of any proof whatever; for a contradiction cannot be proved; that they are of such a character, that it is impossible to bring any arguments in their support, and unnecessary to adduce any arguments against them.

Here then we might rest. If we have established this proposition, the controversy is at an end, as far as regards the truth of the doctrines, and as far as it can be carried on against us by any sect of Christians. Till it can be shown that there is some ESSENTIAL mistake in our preceding statements, he who chooses to urge that these doctrines were taught by Christ and his apostles, must do this not as a Christian, but as an unbeliever. If Christ and his apostles communicated a revelation from God, they could make no part of it, for a revelation from God cannot teach absurdities.

But here we have no intention to rest. If we were to do so, we suppose that, notwithstanding what we have said, the old unfounded complaint would be repeated once more, that we oppose reason to revelation; for there are those, who seem unable to comprehend the possibility, that the doctrines of their sect may make no part of the Christian revelation. What pretence then, we ask, is there for asserting that the doctrines, of which we are speaking, are taught in the scriptures? Certainly they are no where *directly* taught. It cannot even be pretended that they are. There is not a passage from one end of the Bible to the other, on which you can by any violence force such a meaning, as to make it affirm the proposition, "that in the Godhead are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory;" or the proposition that Christ was and "continues to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever." There was a famous passage in the first Epistle of John, (v. 7.) which was believed to affirm *something like* the first mentioned proposition; but this every man of tolerable learning and fairness, at the present day, acknowledges to be spurious. And now this is gone, there is not one to be discovered of a similar character. There is not a passage to be found in the scriptures, which can be imagined to affirm either of those doctrines which

some have represented as being at the very foundation of Christianity.

What pretence then is there for saying that these doctrines are taught in the scriptures? In answer to this question, our opponents first bring forward a small number of passages, by which they maintain that it may be proved that Christ is God. We say a small number of passages. It has been remarked, that it is of no consequence whether the number of passages be few or many in which a doctrine is clearly taught in the scriptures. Certainly;—in which a doctrine is CLEARLY taught. But it is of great consequence, whether the number of passages be few or many, which may bear such an interpretation, that some expressions which they contain shall APPEAR to teach a doctrine irreconcilable with the whole tenor and common language of the scriptures. With these passages, which are adduced as arguments for the divinity of Christ, our opponents likewise bring forward some others which are supposed to intimate or prove the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. It cannot but be observed, however, that Trinitarians for the most part give themselves comparatively little trouble about the latter doctrine, and seem to regard it as following almost as a matter of course, if the former be established. Now there is no dispute that the Father is God; and it being thus proved, that the Son and Spirit are each also God, it is *inferred*, not that there are three Gods, which seems to us the proper consequence, but that there are three persons in the Divinity. But Christ having been proved to be God, and it being at the same time regarded by our opponents as certain that he was a man, it is *inferred* also that he was both God and man. The stress of the argument, it thus appears, bears upon the proposition that Christ was God, the second person in the Trinity, the Son.

Without, then, insisting further on the essential character of the two doctrines in question, we will proceed to inquire what the scriptures teach respecting this proposition, that Christ is God, understood in the Trinitarian sense.

I. In the first place we say, *that, putting every other part of scripture out of view, and forgetting all that it teaches us, this proposition is clearly proved to be false by the very passages which are brought in its support.* We have already had occasion to advert to the character of some of these passages, and we shall now remark upon them a little more fully. They are supposed to prove that Christ is the Supreme God, or God in the highest sense, equal to the Father. Let us see what they really prove.

One of them is that in which our Saviour prays: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with that glory which I had with thee before the world was." John xvii. 5.

The being who prayed to God to glorify him, CANNOT be God.

The first verse of John needs particular explanation, and we shall hereafter recur to it again. We will here only observe, that if by the Logos be meant, as Trinitarians suppose, an intelligent being, a person, and not an attribute of God, and this person be Christ, then the person who was WITH God could not have been God, except in that inferior and figurative sense which some Unitarians have supposed.

We proceed to Colossians i. 15., &c. and here, the first words which we find, declare, that the being spoken of is the image of the Invisible God, and the first born of the whole creation. You may take the latter expression in a sense as figurative and remote from its primary meaning as you please; and render it, for instance, chief of the whole creation; but is it possible that any one can believe, that God is affirmed by the apostle to have been the *image* of God; or that such a metaphor as is conveyed by the word *First born*, could have been used by him concerning the Almighty? The word, First born, [πρωτοτοκος] when used in this metaphorical sense, means as we should expect it to mean from the nature of the metaphor, pre-eminence among beings of the same kind.

Turn now to Philippians ii. 5—8. According to the Trinitarian translation and exposition, Christ (the Supreme God) did not regard his equality with God as an object of solicitous desire, but humbled himself, and submitted to death, even the death of the cross. Can any one imagine that he is to prove to us by such passages as these, that the being to whom they relate is the Invisible and Unchangeable God?

Look at Hebrews i. 8, 9. "Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Do you choose to maintain that this language is used concerning one who possessed essential supreme Divinity? If you bring passages of this sort to *establish* the doctrine, by what use of language, by what possible statements, would you expect it to be *disproved?*

We do not believe that the conclusion of the 5th verse of the 9th chapter of Romans, or the quotation Heb. i. 10. 12. relates to Christ. We conceive that they relate to God, the Father. Laying these for the present out of the question, the passages on which we have remarked are among the principal adduced in support of the doctrine. They stand in the very

* See Professor Stuart's Letters, p. 49.

"The Father loveth the Son, and HATH GIVEN all things into his hand." John iii. 35.

"As the Father hath life in himself, SO HATH HE GIVEN to the Son also to have life in himself." John v. 26.

"The works which the Father HATH GIVEN ME TO PERFORM [i. e. hath enabled me to perform] these works which I do, testify of me, that the Father hath SENT me." John v. 36.

"As the living Father sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER, &c. John vi. 57.

"I speak not from myself, but the Father who sent me hath given me commandment what I should enjoin, and what I should teach. * * * Whatsoever therefore I speak, I speak it according to the commandment which the Father hath given me." John xii. 49, 50.

"The doctrine which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me." John xiv. 24.

"If I perform not the works of my Father, believe me not." John x. 37.

"The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John xiv. 10.

"THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF, but only what he seeth his Father do." John v. 19.

"When ye have set the Son of man on high [i. e. crucified him] then will ye know that I am HE [i. e. the Messiah] and that I do nothing of myself; but speak these things as my Father hath taught me; and that he who sent me is with me." John viii. 28, 29.

We do not multiply passages, because they must be familiar to every one. From the declarations of our Saviour, it appears that he constantly referred the divine power manifested in his miracles, and the divine inspiration by which he spake, to the Father, and not to any other divine person such as Trinitarians suppose. According to their hypothesis, it was the divine power and wisdom of the Son, which were displayed in Jesus; to him therefore should the miracles and doctrine of Jesus have been referred; which they never are. No mention of such a divine person appears in his discourses. But of himself, as the Son of God, he speaks, as of a being perfectly distinct from, and entirely dependent upon his Father and our Father, his God, and our God. These declarations appear to us *decisive* of the controversy. We think that every other argument might be laid aside.

III. But in the third place, we do not believe the doctrine, that Christ is God, *because it is opposed to the whole tenor of scripture, and all the facts in the history of Christ.* Though conceived by a miracle, he was born into the world *as* other men are, and *such* as other men are. He did not come, as some of the Jews imagined their Messiah would come, no man knew whence.* He was a helpless infant. Will you, at the present day, shock our feelings and understanding to the uttermost, by telling us, that Almighty God was incarnate in this infant, and wrapped in swadding clothes?† He grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and men. Read over his history in the evangelists, and ask yourselves if you are not reading the history of a man; though of one indeed to whom God had given his spirit without measure, of one whom he had entrusted with miraculous powers, and constituted a messenger of the most important truth. He appears with all the attributes of humanity. He discovers human affections. He is moved even to tears at the grave of his friend Lazarus. He mourns over the calamities about to overwhelm his country. While enduring the agony of crucifixion, he discovers the strength of his filial affection, and consigns his mother to the care of the disciple whom he loved. He was sometimes excited to indignation, and his soul was sometimes troubled by the sufferings which he endured, and which he anticipated. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause, came I unto this hour."‡ Devotion is the virtue of a created and dependent being. But our Saviour has left us not less an example of piety than of benevolence. His expressions of dependence upon his Father, and upon our Father, are the most absolute and unequivocal. He felt the common wants of our nature, hunger, and thirst and weariness. He was in an agony, and an angel was sent to strengthen him. He suffered death, the common lot of man. He endured the cross, despising the shame, and he did this for THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM.§ Therefore God, even HIS

* "We know whence this man is: whereas when the Christ [the Messiah] cometh, no one knoweth whence he is." John vii. 37.

† Dr. Watts in one of his Hymns says:

> This infant is the MIGHTY GOD,
> Come to be *suckled* and *adored*. B. I. h. 13.

The language is almost too horrible to be quoted.—Dr. Watts was a man of piety and of very considerable intellectual powers. Yet to this extreme point could his mind be debased by a belief of the doctrine against which we are contending.

‡ John xii. 27. § Heb. xii. 2.

GOD, hath HIGHLY EXALTED HIM. But it is useless to quote or allude to passages, which prove that Christ was a being distinct from, inferior to, and dependent upon God. You may find them on every page of the New Testament. The proof of this fact is, as we have said, imbedded and ingrained in those very passages, which are brought to support a contrary proposition. But if from your previous associations, or any other cause, it does not clearly appear to you, that those passages themselves have the character which we suppose, you have only to read a little before or a little after, to find the proof of which we speak. It is imagined, for instance, that the third verse of the first chapter of Hebrews proves that Christ is God. Read the next verse. Is it of God that it is said, "he hath been made better than, [become superior to] the angels, having obtained by inheritance, a more excellent name than they?" And is it in reference to God, that the author goes on to prove and illustrate this assertion?

But it is useless to quote passages in proof of our statements, for another reason. All which we contend for is already conceded by our opponents, fully and explicitly. They allow that Christ was a being distinct from, inferior to, and altogether dependent upon God; for they allow, and even contend, that he was a man. "If the evidence," we are told by Professor Stuart, "be not overwhelming, that Christ was perfectly man; I cannot conceive it possible, that any point in theology, or morals, is capable of being established."* "If this be not a fact, I cannot help believing, that we must forever abandon the hope of acquiring the ideas, which the writers of the New Testament design to convey, in any case whatever."† *If this be a fact*, then the only question which need be examined is, whether it be possible for Christ to have been at once God and man, infinite and finite, omniscient and not omniscient, omnipotent and not omnipotent. To our minds, the propositions here supposed, are of the same character, as if one were to say, that, to be sure, astronomers have correctly estimated the size of the earth; but though this is true, it does notwithstanding fill infinite space. Our apprehensions are so narrow and imperfect, that we cannot with our best efforts perceive, that the latter proposition is more an absurdity in terms than those before implied. And we, at least, have such comfortable views of the justice of God, as not to fear that he will make us suffer for defects purely natural, or for not believing propositions, which, from the very constitution of our minds, he has rendered it impossible that we

* Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 132. † Ib. p. 134.

should believe. But on this subject we refer to what we have before said.

IV. But in the next place, we do not believe the doctrine in question, because *it is evident from the Scriptures, that none of those effects were produced, which must necessarily have been produced by its first preaching, and subsequent communication.* The apostles and disciples of our Saviour must, at some period, have considered him merely as a man. Such he was to all appearance, and such, therefore, they must have believed him to be. Before he commenced his ministry, his relations and fellow-townsmen certainly regarded him as nothing more than a man. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?"* At some particular period, the communication must have been made by our Saviour to his disciples, that he was not a mere man, but that he was, properly speaking and in the highest sense, God himself. The doctrines with which we are contending, and other doctrines of a similar character, have so obscured and confused the whole of Christianity, that even its historical facts appear to be regarded by many scarcely in the light of real occurrences. But we *may* carry ourselves back in imagination to the time when Christ was on earth, and place ourselves in the situation of the first believers. Let us then reflect for a moment on what would be the state of our own feelings, if some one with whom we had associated as a man, were to declare to us, that he was really God himself. If his character and works had been such as to command any attention to such an assertion, through what an agony of incredulity, and doubt, and amazement, and consternation, must the mind still pass, before it could settle down into a conviction of the truth of his declaration. And when convinced of its truth, with what unspeakable astonishment should we be overwhelmed. With what extreme awe, and entire prostration of every faculty, should we approach and contemplate such a being; if indeed man, in his present tenement of clay, could endure such intercourse with his maker. With what a strong and unrelaxing grasp would the idea seize upon our minds to the exclusion of almost every other. How continually would it be expressed in the most forcible language whenever we had occasion to speak of him. What a deep and indelible colouring would it give to every thought and sentiment, in the remotest degree connected with an agent so mysterious and so awful. But we perceive nothing of this

* Mark, vi. 3.

state of mind in the disciples of our Saviour; but a great deal which gives evidence of a very different state of mind. You may read over the three first evangelists, and it must be by a more than ordinary exercise of ingenuity, if you discover what may pass for an argument, that either the writers, or the numerous individuals of whom they speak, regarded our Saviour as their Maker and God; or that he ever assumed this character. The same is true of a majority of the epistles. Can you believe, that if such a most extraordinary communication, as we have supposed, had ever actually been made, no particular record of its circumstances, and immediate effects, would have been preserved? that the evangelists in their accounts of their master would have omitted the most remarkable event in his history? and that three of them at least (for so much must be conceded to us) would have made no direct mention of by far the most astonishing fact in relation to his character? Read over the accounts of the conduct and conversation of his disciples with their master, and put it to your own feelings, whether they ever thought that they were conversing with their God? Read over these accounts attentively, and ask yourselves, if this supposition does not appear to you one of the most incongruous that ever entered the human mind? Take only the facts and conversation, which occurred the night before our Saviour's crucifixion, as related by St. John. Did even Judas believe that he was betraying his God? Their master washed the feet of his apostles. Did the apostles believe—but the question is too shocking to be stated in plain words. Did they then believe their master to be God, when, surprized at his taking notice of an inquiry which they wished to make, but which they had not in fact proposed,* they thus addressed him? "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and that there is no need for any man to question thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God."† Could they imagine, that he, who, throughout his conversation, spoke of himself only as the minister of God, and who in their presence prayed to God, was himself the Almighty? Did they believe that it was the maker of Heaven and Earth whom they were deserting, when they left him upon his apprehension? But there is hardly a fact or conversation recorded in the history of our Saviour's ministry, which may not afford ground for such questions as we have proposed. He who maintains, that the first disciples of our Saviour did

* See John xvi. 17—19. † John xvi. 30.

ever really believe that they were in the immediate presence of their God, must, one would think, maintain at the same time, that they were a class of men by themselves, and that their whole feelings and conduct were immeasurably and inconceivably different, from what those of any other human beings would have been, under the same belief. But beside the entire absence of that state of mind, which must have been produced by this belief, there are other continual indications, direct and indirect, of their opinions and feelings respecting their master, perfectly irreconcilable, as it seems to us, with the supposition of its existence during any period of his ministry, or their own. Throughout the New-Testament we find nothing which implies, that such a most extraordinary change of feeling ever took place in the disciples of Christ, as must have been produced by the communication, that their master was God himself upon earth. No where do we find the expressions of those irresistible and absorbing sentiments, which must have possessed their minds under the conviction of this fact. With this conviction, in what terms, for instance, would they have spoken of his crucifixion, and of the circumstances with which it was attended? The power of language would have sunk under them in the attempt to express their feelings. Their words, when they approached the subject, would have been little more than a thrilling cry of horror and indignation. On this subject, they did indeed feel most deeply, and as *we*, with our belief, should expect them to feel. But do you think that St. Peter regarded his master as God incarnate, when he thus addressed the Jews by whom Christ had just been crucified? "Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth proved unto you to be a man from God by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know, him delivered up by the determined will and foreknowledge of God, ye have crucified and slain by the hands of ungodly men. Him hath God raised to life."*

But what we have stated are not the only consequences which must necessarily have followed from the communication of the doctrine in question. It cannot be denied by those who hold this doctrine, in connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity, that however satisfactorily it may be explained, and however well it may be reconciled with that fundamental principle of religion, to which the Jews were so strongly attached, the doctrine of the Unity of God, yet that it does or may at

* Acts ii. 22—24.





first sight appear somewhat inconsistent with it. From the time of the Jew who disputed with Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, to the present period, it has always been regarded by the unbelieving Jews with abhorrence. They have represented the Christians as no better than idolaters; as denying the first truth of religion. But the unbelieving Jews, in the time of the apostles, opposed Christianity with the utmost bitterness, and passion. They sought on every side for objections to it. There was much in its character to which the believing Jews could hardly be reconciled. The Epistles are full of statements, explanations, and controversy, relating to questions having their origin in Jewish prejudices and passions. But with regard to this doctrine, which, if it had ever been taught, the believing Jews must have received with the utmost difficulty, and to which the unbelieving Jews would have manifested the most determined opposition—with regard to this doctrine, there is no trace of any controversy. "The sacred writers," says Professor Stuart, "do not appear to me to write as controversialists, on the subject of Christ's divinity."* But if it had ever really been taught, it must have been the main point of attack and defence between those who assailed, and those who supported Christianity. There is nothing ever said in its explanation. But it must have required, far more than any other doctrine, to be explained, illustrated, and enforced; for it appears not only irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Unity of God; but equally so with that of the humanity of our Saviour; and yet both these doctrines, it seems, were to be maintained in connexion with it. It must have been necessary, therefore, to state it as clearly as possible, to exhibit it in its relations, and carefully to guard against the misapprehensions to which it is so liable on every side. Especially must care have been taken to prevent the gross mistakes into which the Gentile converts from polytheism were likely to fall. Yet so far from any such clearness of statement, and fulness of explanation, the whole language of the New Testament in relation to this subject is, (as we have before said) a series of ænigmas, upon the supposition of the truth of the doctrine. "The sacred writers," says Professor Stuart, "*appear not to take the least pains* to separate the two natures in *any thing* which they say of *either*. They every where speak of Christ, (it appears to me so) as either *human* or *divine*, or *both*. They do not seem to apprehend any danger of mistake in regard to the subject."† We

* Letters, p. 128.

† Letters, p. 85.

believe with Professor Stuart, that they never did apprehend any danger of mistake in regard to the subject. But if they had actually taught the doctrine in the manner which he supposes, we must say, that this want of apprehension would have been to the last degree astonishing and unaccountable.—The doctrine, then, is never defended in the New Testament, though unquestionably it would have been the main object of attack, and the main difficulty in the Christian system. It is never explained, though no doctrine could have been so much in need of explanation. On the contrary, upon the supposition of its truth, the apostles express themselves in such a manner, that if it had been their purpose to darken and perplex the subject, they could not have done it more effectually. And still further, this doctrine is never insisted upon as a necessary article of faith; though it is now represented by its defenders as lying at the foundation of Christianity. With a few exceptions, the passages in which it is imagined to be taught, are introduced incidentally, the attention of the writer being principally directed to some other topic; or they can be regarded only as accidental notices. In the three first gospels, and in the greater part of the epistles, no supposed mention can be found of it, capable, as it seems to us, of being moulded into a plausible argument. It appears, then, that while other questions of far less difficulty, (for instance, the circumcision of the Gentile converts,) were subjects of such doubt and controversy, that even the authority of the apostles was barely sufficient to establish the truth, this doctrine, so extraordinary, so obnoxious, and so hard to be understood, was introduced in silence, and received without any hesitation, dislike, opposition, or misapprehension. There are not many propositions, to be proved or disproved merely by moral evidence, which would appear to us more incredible.

We wish to repeat some of the ideas already suggested in a little different connexion. The doctrine, that Christ was God himself, appearing upon earth to make atonement for the sins of men, is represented by those who maintain it, as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, affecting essentially the whole character of our religion. If true, it must, indeed, have affected essentially the whole character of the writings of the New Testament. A truth of such awful and tremendous interest, a fact, "at which reason stands aghast, and faith herself is half confounded,"* a doctrine, so adapted to seize upon and

* Such is the language of Bishop Hurd in defending the doctrine. "In this awfully stupendous manner, at which REASON STANDS AGHAST, AND FAITH HERSELF IS HALF CONFOUNDED, was the grace of God to man at length manifested." Sermons vol. ii. p. 289. London, 1785.

possess the imagination and the feelings, and at once so necessary and so difficult to be understood, must have appeared every where in the New Testament, in the most prominent relief. Nobody, one would think, can seriously imagine it any answer to this remark, to say, that "the Apostles doubtless expected to be believed when they had *once* plainly asserted any thing;"* and to insinuate, that their veracity might have been suspected, if they had made frequent and confident asseverations of the truth of the doctrine.† What was the business of the Apostles, but to teach and explain, to enforce and defend, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? We say to *defend* these doctrines; for he who reads the epistles with any attention, will not, we believe, think that the authority of an apostle was in every case quite so decisive in bearing down at once all error, and doubt, and opposition, as it is represented to have been in the remarks just quoted. But from the very nature of the human mind, if their minds at all resembled those of other men, the fact that their master was the Almighty, clothed in flesh, must have appeared continually in their writings, in direct assertions, in allusions, in the strongest possible expressions of feeling, in a thousand different forms. The intrinsic difficulty of the doctrine in question is so great, and such was the ignorance of the first converts, and their narrowness of conception, that it is one, to which the apostles must have continually recurred, for the purpose of explaining it, and guarding it against misapprehension. As a fundamental doctrine of our religion, it is one which they must have been constantly employed in teaching. If it were a doctrine of Christianity, the evidence for it would burst from every part of the New Testament, in a blaze of light. Do you think that we should be left to collect the proof of a fundamental article of our faith, and the evidence of incomparably the most astonishing fact that ever occurred upon our earth, from some expres-

* Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 128.

†"The Apostles doubtless expected to be believed, when they had *once* plainly asserted any thing. That they are not, is indeed to be lamented: but it cannot be charged to their fault. They felt, (what we feel now,) that very frequent, strong, and direct asseverations of any thing are apt to produce a suspicion in the minds of a hearer or reader, that the person making them has not arguments on which he relies, and so substitutes confident affirmations in their room; or that he is himself but imperfectly satisfied with the cause which he defends; or that he has sinister motives in view. For myself, I confess I am inclined to suspect a man of all these, who makes very frequent and confident asseverations." Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 128.

sions scattered here and there, the greater part of them being dropt incidentally; and that really one of the most plausible arguments for it would be found in the omission of the Greek article in four or five texts? Do you think, that such a doctrine would have been so taught, that putting out of view the passages above referred to, the whole remaining body of the New Testament, the whole history of our Saviour, and the prevailing and almost uniform language of his apostles should appear, at least, to be thoroughly irreconcilable with it? We speak, it will be remembered, merely of the proposition, that Christ was God. With regard to the doctrine of his double nature, or the doctrine of the Trinity, it cannot, as we have said, be pretended that either of these is any where directly taught. The whole character of the New Testament, of the gospels and of the epistles, seems to us entirely different from what it must have been, if the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians are true. To our minds, it is incredible, that they should not, if true, have appeared in the scriptures in a form essentially different from that, in which alone, it can be pretended that they do at present.

Here we close our argument from scripture; though no one acquainted with the controversy will suppose that we have exhausted the subject. Among other assertions equally unfounded, it has been said, that we support our opinions by perverted ingenuity, by introducing incorrect principles of interpretation, by looking out for various readings, and by rash and hazardous criticisms. We have shown how we support our opinions. They rest, as it seem to us, upon a broad and deep foundation; not upon a few difficult passages, found here and there, but upon the clear, prevailing sense of the whole of the New Testament. Our learning, when applied at all to the criticism of the New Testament in relation to this subject, is applied, as we think, only to remove error and misconception. Our opinions are those, which we think an unlettered man of plain good sense, and unprejudiced mind, must receive from his common reading of the scriptures. But if any one choose to rest his faith upon the particular passages adduced by our opponents, it certainly becomes him to be well satisfied that these passages are correctly interpreted and understood; and it seems to us unreasonable to suppose that this state of mind can be fairly attained without some familiarity with the art of criticism, and some acquaintance with the Greek language. We give one meaning to those passages, and our opponents give another. Upon what ground shall any one positively decide, that the latter is right, and the former is wrong, without having himself investigated their meaning; except upon the obvious, and, we





think, perfectly satisfactory ground, which at once presents itself, the CLEAR SENSE OF THE REST OF SCRIPTURE. With regard to Philippians ii. 5—8, Professor Stuart says, that '*after laborious examination*' he is 'persuaded that the Greek of this passage not only admits, but demands' a Trinitarian rendering; and 'that a fair examination of μορφη [the word translated *form*, in the phrase *form* of God] either generally, or in special relation to the passage before us, will end in the conviction, that the word is not unfrequently synonymous with φυσις (nature) and ουσια (being).' It is through a similar process that every one should pass in order to be satisfied, whether correctly or not, that this text and others may bear and were intended to express a Trinitarian meaning. It appears in Professor Stuart's book how the Trinitarian doctrine must be defended. Supposing that any one be unable to judge for himself of the correctness of his statements, translations, and criticisms (and many of them appear to us altogether incorrect) what course is it then proper for him to adopt? What is he to do, who has neither leisure nor critical skill for a 'laborious examination' of the passages adduced by Trinitarians? Is he to believe blindly such a doctrine as that of the Trinity, receiving it merely upon the authority of some Trinitarian critic? We think not. But there is one course which he may pursue, that seems to us perfectly safe and satisfactory. He may rest his faith upon the plain, undisputed, indisputable meaning of almost the whole of the New Testament. No interpretation of the passages in question CAN BE correct, which contradicts the common language of our Saviour and his apostles. He may make the clear, prevailing sense of scripture his rule, by which to judge of the true sense either of these, or of any other disputed passages. There can be no better rule either for the learned or the unlearned. Having adopted this principle of judgment, he will find, that critics, inferior to none in ability, learning and fairness, have explained these passages in such a manner, that they present no difficulty when compared with the rest of scripture; and that there is no reason therefore that they should occasion him any anxiety or doubt. He will find, for instance, with regard to the passage just adverted to, those who will tell him, what he might be very apt to suspect beforehand, that the *form of God* does not mean the *nature* or *being* of God, any more than the *form of a servant*, in the same passage, means the *nature* or *being* of a servant.

Some of our opponents insist, in language which seems to us extremely presumptuous, that if we reject their doctrines, we must also reject the scriptures, and give up our Christian faith.

They are not very scrupulous in refraining from the use of those somewhat dishonourable weapons of warfare, insinuations and charges of real or virtual infidelity. We value Christianity quite as much as they can do; and we feel compelled to say, that we think we understand its real value much better than they do. We believe its divine origin in the highest and strongest possible sense of the words, quite as firmly as they can; and we think we perceive the intrinsic divinity of its character with incomparably more clearness, than it can be discerned by those, who, as it seems to us, have mistaken some of the grossest and worst errors of men for essential doctrines of the religion of God. Whether Christianity must share the fate of the doctrines against which we are contending; and whether we, or those who maintain these doctrines, hold opinions opposite to the clear and decided testimony of revelation, are questions which, we think, the preceding statements afford some means of determining. They are questions of very serious importance; and let every man make it a matter of conscience to decide them according to the best of his ability.

If there is not some essential error in our preceding statements and reasonings, it is clear that the doctrine of the Trinity was not taught by Christ and his apostles, either directly or by implication. Whence then was it derived? In answer to this question, we have something more, and something very material to say. Reason and scripture have borne their testimony against it; and we are now about to call another witness, Ecclesiastical history.

In the next place, then, *we do not believe this doctrine, because we can trace its history, and show its origin, in a very different source from the Christian revelation.* We distinctly trace its origin to the Platonic philosophy, which was the popular and prevalent philosophy during the first ages, subsequent to the introduction of Christianity; and of which all the more eminent Christian writers, the fathers, as they are called, were, in a greater or less degree, disciples. They, as others have often done, blended their philosophy and their religion into one complex and heterogeneous system; and taught the doctrines of the former as those of the latter. In this manner, they introduced gross errors into the popular faith. The facts which we have stated are not to be denied. They are proved by the most satisfactory evidence; and are affirmed or acknowledged by writers who hold the most opposite opinions upon other subjects. "It is an old complaint of learned men," says Mosheim, "that the *fathers*, or teachers

of the ancient church, were too much inclined to the philosophy of Plato, and rashly confounded what was taught by that philosopher with the doctrines of Christ, our Saviour; in consequence of which, the religion of Heaven was greatly corrupted, and the truth much obscured."* This passage is from the Dissertation of Mosheim, concerning the injury done to the church by the later Platonists. In the same dissertation, after stating some of the obstructions thrown in the way of Christianity, by those of the later Platonists, who were its enemies, he proceeds to say: "But these evils were only external, and although they were injurious to our most holy religion, and delayed its progress, yet did not corrupt its very nature, and disease, if I may so speak, its vitals. More fatal distempers afflicted Christianity, after this philosophy had entered the very limits of the sacred city; and had built a habitation for herself in the minds of those to whom the business of instruction was committed. There is nothing, the most sacred in our faith, which from that time was not profaned, and did not lose a great part of its original and natural form."† "Few of the learned," he adds in another place, "are so unacquainted with ecclesiastical history, as to be ignorant what a great number of errors, and most preposterous opinions, flowed in from this impure fountain."‡ Among the false doctrines thus introduced from the Platonic philosophy, is to be reckoned, we believe, preeminently that of the Trinity. Gibbon says, with a sneer, that "the Athenian sage [Plato] marvellously anticipated one of the most surprising discoveries of the Christian revelation." It is not here the place to inquire, how far the doctrines of Plato himself, respecting the divinity, coincided with those afterwards maintained by his followers; but there is no question that the doctrine of the Trinity was a favourite doctrine of the later Platonists, equally of those who who were not Christians, as of those who were. Both the one and the other class expressed the doctrine in similar terms, explained it in a similar manner, and defended it, as far as the nature of the case allowed, by similar arguments; and both appealed in its support to the authority of Plato. Clement of Alexandria, one of the earliest of the Trinitarian and Platonizing fathers, (he flourished in the first part of the third century) endeavours to show, that the doctrine was taught by that philosopher. Among other passages, he quotes one from the Timæus of Plato, in which mention is made of a second and third principle, beside the 'King of all things.' In this

* Mosheim, De turbata per recentiores Platonicos Ecclesia, Commentatio, § vi.

† Ibid. § xxxiii.

‡ Ibid. § xlviii.

passage, he observes, he "can understand nothing to be meant but the Sacred Trinity; the third principle being the Holy Spirit, and the second principle being the Son, by whom all things were created according to the will of the Father."* Two hundred years after Clement, Augustin tells us in his Confessions, that he found the true doctrine concerning the Logos in a Latin translation of some Platonic writings, which the providence of God had thrown in his way.† In his time Christianity was so assimilated to Platonism, that Augustin, speaking of those ancient philosophers, who were particularly admired by the later Platonists, says: "If these men could revive, and live over again their lives with us, with the change of a few words and sentences, they would become Christians, as very many Platonists of our own time have done."‡ Basnage had good reason for observing, that the fathers almost made of Plato a Christian, before the introduction of Christianity. Immediately after this remark, Basnage quotes a writer of the fifth century, who expresses with honest zeal his admiration at the supposed fact, that the Athenian sage should have so marvellously anticipated the most mysterious doctrines of revelation.§

We will produce a few passages from modern *Trinitarian* writers, to show the near resemblance between the Christian and Platonic Trinity. The very learned Cudworth, in his great work on the Intellectual System, has brought together all that antiquity could furnish to illustrate the doctrine. He institutes a long and minute comparison between the form in which it was held by the Heathen Platonists, and that in which it was held by the Christian fathers. Toward the conclusion of this, we find the following passages:

"Thus have we given a true and full account, how, according to Athanasius, the three divine hypostases, though not *monoousious*, but *homoousious* only, are really but one God or Divinity. In all which doctrine of his, there is nothing but what a true and genuine Platonist would readily subscribe to."‖

"As the Platonic Pagans, after Christianity did approve of the Christian doctrine concerning the Logos, as that which

* Stromat: v. Opp. p. 593. Sylburg: p. 710. Potter.

† Tu, Domine—procurasti mihi—quosdam Platonicorum libros, &c. Opp. T. I. c. 128. Basil, 1556.

‡ Lib. de vera religione. Opp. T. I. c. 704.

§ Basnage, Histoire des Juifs. Liv. iv. ch. iv. § 20.

‖ P. 620 of the folio. London, 1678.

was exactly agreeable with their own; so did the generality of the Christian fathers before and after the Nicene council, represent the genuine Platonic Trinity as really the same thing with the Christian, or as approaching so near to it, that they differed chiefly in circumstances, or the manner of expression."*

In proof of this, Cudworth produces many passages similar to those which we have quoted from Clement of Alexandria, and Augustin. Athanasius, he observes, 'sends the Arians to school to the Platonists.'†

Basnage was not disposed to allow such a resemblance between the Christian and Platonic trinity, as that which Cudworth maintains, and has written expressly in refutation of the latter. It is not necessary to enter into this controversy. The sentence with which he concludes his two chapters‡ on the subject, is enough for our purpose. "Christianity, in its triumph, has often reflected honour on the Platonists; and as the Christians took some pride in finding the Trinity taught by a philosopher, so the Platonists were proud in their turn to see the Christians adopt their principles."

There has been no more noted defender of the doctrine in modern times, than Bishop Horsley. The following is a quotation from his letters to Dr. Priestley:

"I am very sensible, that the Platonizers of the second century were the orthodox of that age. I have not denied this. On the contrary, I have endeavoured to show that their Platonism brings no imputation upon their orthodoxy. The advocates of the Catholic faith in modern times have been too apt to take alarm at the charge of Platonism. I rejoice and glory in the opprobrium. I not only confess, but I maintain, not a perfect agreement, but such a similitude, as speaks a common origin, and affords an argument in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine [of the Trinity] from its conformity to the most ancient and universal traditions."§

In another place he says: "It must be acknowledged, that the first converts from the Platonic school took advantage of the resemblance between the Evangelic and Platonic doctrine on the subject of the Godhead, to apply the principles of their old philosophy to the explication and confirmation of the articles of their faith. They defended it by arguments drawn

* Page 621. † Page 623. ‡ Histoire des Juifs. Liv. iv. ch. iii. iv.

§ Letters to Dr. Priestley, Letter 13.

from Platonic principles, and even propounded it in Platonic language."*

We might produce many more authorities in support of the facts which we have stated. But we conceive it wholly unnecessary. The fair inference from all these facts, every reader, we conceive, is able to draw for himself. The doctrine of the Trinity is not a doctrine of Christ and his apostles, but a fiction of the school of the latter Platonists, introduced into our religion by the early fathers, who were admirers and disciples of the philosophy taught in this school. The want of all mention of it in the scriptures is abundantly compensated by the ample space which it occupies in the writings of the heathen Platonists, and of the Platonizing fathers.

But what we have stated is not the only evidence which Ecclesiastical history affords against this doctrine. The conclusion to which we have just arrived is confirmed by other facts, to some of which we have already adverted, and others of which we can now barely mention; by the facts *of its gradual introduction; of its slow growth to its present form; of the strong opposition which it encountered; and of its tardy reception among the great body of common Christians.*†

We have thus given an account of the reasons, why we do not believe the doctrines held by Trinitarians, respecting the nature of God, and the person of Jesus Christ. It is rare, it seems to us, that any popular error is so assailable and vulnerable on every side. We shall not recapitulate what we have written. We have endeavoured to express ourselves as concisely as possible. If any one should think our arguments of force; but yet not be fully satisfied of their correctness, it will be but the labour of an hour or two, to read them over again. The time will be well spent, if it should contribute toward freeing his belief from an essential error; and giving him clearer, juster, and consequently more honourable views of Christianity. It will be well spent, even if he should merely be led to think more correctly of a large portion of his fellow Christians, to perceive that they are not fair objects of all those outrages which have been directed against them; and that they have not adopted their opinions through any want of reverence for the scriptures.

* Charge iv. § 2. published in Horsley's Tracts in controversy with Dr. Priestley.

† On these subjects, see Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions respecting the person of Christ.





We proceed now to remark upon the passages adduced by Trinitarians in support of their opinions, and upon the proper mode of interpreting these passages. What we have already said requires no familiar acquaintance with the science of theology, in order to be readily apprehended. It is addressed to the plain good sense of every intelligent reader. The arguments which we have used, with the exception, perhaps, of our account of the origin of the doctrine, are such, that those who are, and those who are not familiar with theological studies, may be equally competent to judge of their correctness. But in what we have to say respecting the interpretation of these passages, we must occupy somewhat different ground, and enter the confines of critical learning. We shall endeavour, and we hope not without success, to be as clear as possible; but the subject necessarily involves statements, remarks, reasonings, and criticisms of such a character, that they may not be apprehended with perfect ease; nor their force and correctness at once perceived, by one altogether unacquainted with these studies. Before, however, entering on the main question respecting the proper mode of interpreting these passages, we shall premise two or three general remarks.

We have already, we conceive, furnished some *direct* answer to the argument founded upon these passages. We have done this, if there be any truth in the remark which we have made, that these passages alone afford sufficient materials for disproving the main doctrine which they are brought to support, the doctrine that Christ is God. We think, as we have said, that a large proportion of them contain language, which cannot be used concerning God, which necessarily distinguishes Christ from God, and which clearly represents him as an inferior and dependent being.

We wish to recal another remark to the recollection of our readers. It is, that the doctrines maintained by Trinitarians, upon the supposition of their truth must have been taught in the scriptures, in a manner very different from what it can be pretended, that they are. Let any one recollect that neither the doctrine of the Trinity, nor that concerning the double nature of Christ are any where *directly* taught; and then let him look over the passages which are brought to prove the proposition, that Christ is God; let him consider how they are collected from one place and another, and how thinly they are found scattered through the New Testament; let him observe that in a majority of the books of the New Testament, there are none on which a prudent reasoner would choose to

rely; and then let him remember the general tenor of the Christian scriptures, and the undisputed meaning of far the greater part of their language in relation to this subject. Having done this, we think he may safely say, before any critical examination of the meaning of these passages, that their meaning must have been mistaken; that the evidence adduced appears altogether defective *in its general aspect;* and that it is not by such detached passages as these, taken in a sense opposed to the general tenor of scripture, that a doctrine like that in question can be established. We might, it seems to us, almost as reasonably attempt to prove, in opposition to the daily witness of the heavens, that there are three suns instead of but one, by building an argument on the accounts which we have of parhelia.

Another remark of some importance is, that, as Trinitarians differ much in their accounts of the doctrine, so are they not well agreed in their manner of defending it. When the doctrine was first introduced, it was defended as Bishop Horsley tells us, "by arguments drawn from Platonic principles." To say nothing of these, some of the favorite arguments from scripture of the ancient fathers, were such as no Trinitarian at the present day would choose to insist upon. One of those, for instance, which was adduced to prove the Trinity, is found in Ecclesiastes, iv. 12. "A threefold cord is not soon broken." Not a few of the fathers, says Whitby, explain this concerning the Holy Trinity.* Another passage often adduced, and among others by Athanasius, as declarative of the generation of the Son from the substance of the Father, was discovered in the first verse of the 45th Psalm. The argument founded upon this, disappears altogether in our common version, which renders: "My heart is inditing a good matter." But the word in the Septuagint, corresponding to *matter* in the common version, is *Logos;* and the fathers understood the passage thus: My heart is throwing out a good Logos.† A proof, that the second person in the Trinity became incarnate, was found in Proverbs ix. 1. "Wisdom hath builded her house;"‡ for the second person, or the Son, was regarded in the theology of the times as the Wisdom of the Father. These are merely specimens taken from among many of a similar character, a number more of which may be found in the work of Whitby just referred to in our notes. Since the first

* Whitby Dissertatio de Scripturarum Interpretatione secundum Patrum Commentarios, pp. 95, 96.

† Ib. p. 75. ‡ Ib. p. 92.

introduction of the doctrine, the mode of its defence has been continually changing. As more just notions respecting the criticism and interpretation of the scriptures have slowly made their way, one passage after another has been dropped from the Trinitarian roll. Some, which are retained by one expositor, are given up by another. Professor Stuart has expressly abandoned one or two which have been commonly among those first quoted, and has neglected to bring forward others. But this procedure is not peculiar to him. Even two centuries ago, Calvin threw away, or depreciated the value of many texts, which most Trinitarians would think hardly to be spared. There are, we believe, not many of much importance in the controversy, the orthodox exposition of which has not been given up by some one or more of the principal Trinitarian critics among Protestants. Among the Catholics, there are many by whom it is rather affirmed than conceded, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not to be proved from the scriptures, but rests for its support upon the *tradition of the church*.

But these remarks are merely preliminary. We now proceed to our main purpose in this part of the article, which is to show in what manner the passages adduced by Trinitarians are to be regarded and understood, *so far as these passages may in fact appear to favour their doctrines*.

The state of the case then, as far as it regards the interpretion of these passages, we conceive to be this. Our opponents quote certain texts, and explain them in a meaning which, regarding only some particular expressions in these texts, goes to support their opinions. We explain the same texts in a very different meaning; and believe our sense to be the true one. The words, considered in themselves, will perhaps bear either meaning, that of our opponents, as well as our own. We will at least concede, for the sake of argument, that this is the case. In what manner, then, are we to decide which meaning is the true one? How are we to determine, whether the meaning in which we explain any passage, or that which is put upon it by our opponents, is the sense which was intended by the writer?

In order to answer these questions, we must enter into a little explanation, concerning the nature of language, and the principles of its interpretation. The art of interpretation derives its origin from the *intrinsic ambiguity of language*. What we mean to express by this term, is the fact, that a very large proportion of sentences, *considered in themselves, merely in respect to the words of which they are composed*, are capable of expressing not one meaning only, but two or more different

meanings; or, (to state this fact in other terms) that in very many cases, the same sentence, like the same single word, may be used to express very different senses. Now, in a great part of what we find written concerning the interpretation of language, and in a large proportion of the specimens of criticism which we meet with, especially upon the scriptures, this fundamental truth, this fact, which lies at the very bottom of the art of interpretation, has been entirely overlooked, or at least not regarded in its relations and consequences. We will illustrate it by a single example. St. John thus addresses the Christians, to whom he was writing, in his first epistle, ii. 20.

"*Ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and know all things.*"

If we consider these words in themselves merely, we shall perceive how uncertain is their signification, and how many different meanings, they may be used to express. The first clause, 'Ye have an anointing from the Holy One,' may signify,

1. *Through the favour of God, ye have become Christians, or believers in Christ:* anointing being a ceremony of consecration, and Christians being considered as consecrated and set apart from the rest of mankind.

2. Or it may mean, *Ye have been truly sanctified in heart and life:* a figure borrowed from outward consecration being used to denote inward holiness.

3. Or, *Ye have been endued with miraculous powers:* consecrated as prophets and teachers in the Christian community.

4. Or, *Ye have been well instructed in the truths of Christianity.**

We forbear to mention other meanings, which the words might be used to express. These are sufficient for our purpose.

The term, *Holy One*, in such a relation as it holds to the other words in the present sentence, may denote either God, or Christ, or some other being.

*Ye know all things* literally expresses the meaning, *Ye have the attribute of omniscience.* Beside this meaning, it may signify, *Ye are fully acquainted with all the objects of human knowledge*; or, *Ye know every truth connected with Christianity;* or, *Ye have all the knowledge necessary to form your faith, and direct your conduct;* or the proposition may require some other limitation, for *all things* is one of those terms, the meaning of which is continually to be restrained and

* See Wetstein's notes on this passage, and on 1 Tim. iv. 7.





modified by a regard to the subject present to the mind of the writer.

This statement may afford some imperfect notion of the various senses which these words may be used to express; and of the uncertainty which must exist about their meaning, when they are regarded without reference to those considerations by which their meaning ought to be determined. We say, imperfect, because we have really kept one very important consideration in mind, that they were written by an apostle to a Christian community. Putting this out of view, it would not be easy to fix the limit of their possible meanings. It must be remembered, that we have adduced this passage merely by way of illustration; and that if it were necessary an indefinite number of similar examples might be quoted.

We will mention, and we can barely mention, some of the principal causes of the intrinsic ambiguity of language. I. Almost every word is used in a variety of senses; and some words in a great variety. Now as you assign one or another of these senses to different words in a sentence, you change the meaning of the whole sentence. If they are important words, and the different senses which you assign vary much from each other, you change its meaning essentially. II. But beside their common significations, words may be used in an undefined number of figurative senses. A large proportion of sentences may, therefore, be understood either figuratively or literally. Considered in themselves, they present no intrinsic character that may enable us to determine whether they are literal or figurative. They may often be understood in more than one literal, and in more than one figurative sense; and a choice is then to be made among all these different senses. III. A very large proportion of sentences which are not what rhetoricians call figurative, are yet not to be understood strictly, not to the letter, but with some limitation, and often with a limitation which contracts exceedingly their literal meaning; with some exception, or some modification of one sort or another, which does not appear in the words of the sentence. "I do not," says Mr. Burke, addressing the friend to whom he is writing, in his Reflections on the French Revolution, "I do not conceive you to be of that sophistical, captious spirit, or of that uncandid dullness, as to require for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from a reasonable man." Sentences which are general or universal in their terms, are often to be regarded in relation to the subject

about which they are employed, or the persons to whom they were addressed; and their meaning is often to be greatly limited by a regard to one or another of these considerations. IV. In eloquence, in poetry, in popular writing of every sort, and not least in the scriptures, a great part of the language used is the language of emotion or feeling. The strict and literal meaning of this language is, of course, a meaning which the words may be used to express; but this is rarely their true meaning. The language of feeling is very different from that of philosophical accuracy. The mind, when strongly excited, delights in general unlimited propositions, in hyperboles, in bold figures of every sort, in forcible statements addressed indirectly to the understanding through the medium of the imagination, and in the expression of those temporary false judgments which are the natural result, and consequently among the most natural expressions, of strong emotion. If any one supposes that language of this sort is to be understood to the letter, he will fall into gross mistakes. Different senses in which it may be understood often present themselves; and it is sometimes not easy to determine which to adopt.

These are *some* of the principal causes from which the intrinsic ambiguity of language proceeds; or, as we may say in other terms, these are some of the principal modes in which this ambiguity manifests itself. But a full analysis of the subject, accompanied by proper examples, would fill more pages than those of the present pamphlet. From what we have already said, the truth of the fact which we are maintaining, will, we think, appear, at least sufficiently for our present purpose.

It is, then, to the intrinsic ambiguity of language, that the art of interpretation owes its origin. If words and sentences were capable of expressing but a single meaning, no art would be required in their interpretation. It would be, as a late writer,* thoroughly ignorant of the subject, supposes, a work to be performed merely with the assistance of a lexicon and grammar. The object of the art of interpretation is to enable us to solve the difficulties presented by the intrinsic ambiguity of language. It first teaches us to perceive the different meanings which any sentence may be used to express, as the different words of which it is composed are taken respectively in one sense or another; as it is understood literally, or figuratively; strictly and to the letter, or popularly and in a modifi-

* Dr. Thomas Chalmers. See the conclusion of his work on the Evidences of Christianity.





ed sense; as the language of emotion, or as a calm and unimpassioned expression of thoughts and sentiments; and it then teaches us, which is its ultimate purpose, to distinguish among *possible* meanings, the *actual* meaning of the sentence, or that meaning which, in the particular case we are considering, was intended by the author. And in what manner does it enable us to do this? Here again a full and particular answer to this question is not to be comprized in the compass of a few pages. The general answer is, that it enables us to do this *by directing our attention to all those considerations which may render it probable, that one meaning was intended by the writer rather than another.*

Some of these considerations are, the character of the writer, his habits of thinking and feeling, his common style of expression, his settled opinions and belief, the extent of his knowledge, the general state of things in which he lived, the particular local and temporary circumstances present to his mind while writing, the character and condition of those for whom he wrote, the opinions of others to which he had reference, the connexion of the sentence, or the train of thought by which it is preceded and followed, and, finally, the manner in which he was understood by those for whom he wrote, a consideration, the importance of which varies with circumstances. The considerations to be attended to by an interpreter, are here reduced to their elements. We cannot dwell long enough upon the subject, to point out any of the different forms and combinations in which they may appear. But where the words which compose a sentence are such, that the sentence may be used to express more than one meaning, its true meaning is to be determined SOLELY by a reference to EXTRINSIC CONSIDERATIONS, such as we have stated. In the case supposed (a case of very frequent occurrence) all that we can learn from the mere words of the sentence, is the different meanings which the sentence is capable of expressing. It is obvious that the words, considered in themselves, can afford no assistance in determining which of these different meanings was that *intended by the author*. This problem is to be solved solely by a process of reasoning, founded upon such considerations as we have stated.*

* Upon the subject of the interpretation of language, with particular reference to the criticism of the scriptures, the author of the present pamphlet hopes, at some future time, to explain the facts and principles here stated much more fully. The best treatise on the subject, with which he is acquainted, is contained in the first volume of Le Clerc's Ars Critica. It is only one of Le Clerc's titles to praise, that he was a

We will illustrate this account of the principles of interpretation by an example of their application.

Of MILTON, Dr. Johnson says, that

"*He had considered creation in its whole extent*, and his descriptions are therefore learned."

"But he could not be always in other worlds, he must sometimes return to earth, and talk of things visible and known."

Addison tells us, that "he knew *all* the arts of affecting the mind."

Bentley, in the preface to his edition of the Paradise Lost, speaks of him thus:

"He could expatiate at large through the compass of the whole universe; and through all Heaven beyond it, could survey all periods of time from before the creation to the consummation of all things."

"Milton's strong pinion now not Heaven can bound," are the words of Pope.

*He passed*, says Gray, *the flaming bounds of space and time, and saw the living throne of God.*

In the age subsequent to his own, "he continued," says Aikin, "to stand alone, an insulated form of unrivalled greatness."

very clear minded and acute philologist. Our knowledge of the art of interpretation, considered in respect to its general principles, has been little advanced since the time when he wrote.

In regard to the philosophy of the art, the German expositors, whom Professor Stuart mentions near the conclusion of his pamphlet, have done little or nothing with which we are acquainted. Some of them are undoubtedly very good verbal critics, and well acquainted with many of the subsidiary branches of learning necessary in explaining the scriptures. But as expositors of the New Testament, we estimate the worth of the infidel theologians of Germany,—that class of which Professor Stuart particularly speaks—as being much less, than what that gentleman is disposed to ascribe to them. Beside that we do not think very highly of their judgment and good sense; they are entirely defective in the most essential particular necessary to qualify them for the work. Upon the principles of interpretation which we have laid down, it is apparent that in order to explain the New Testament correctly, *it is necessary to have just notions of the intellectual and moral character of our Saviour and his apostles, and of the circumstances under which they spoke or wrote.* But the theologians to whom we refer, entertain opinions on these subjects which appear to us entirely incorrect. In consequence, the general style of interpretation which has been adopted by some German critics, as Paulus for instance, seems to us to the last degree extravagant and absurd. For many particular expositions, we might in vain seek for a parallel since the time of the Fathers; unless we were to make an exception in favour of what may be found in the commentaries of some orthodox divines. Indeed there seems to us a little inconsistency in Professor Stuart's celebrating these men as among the most admirable of critics, and at the same time producing such extraordinary specimens as he does of the result of their labours.







in question would be very irrational, if understood literally without reference to the doctrine of transubstantiation; and altogether absurd, if supposed to imply the truth of this doctrine. It is upon the same principle, that we interpret a very large proportion of all the figurative language which we meet with. We at once reject the literal meaning of the words, and understand them as figurative, because if we did not do this, they would convey some meaning which contradicts common sense; and it would be inconsistent with our notions of the character of the writer, to suppose him to intend such a meaning. But this principle, which is adopted unconsciously in the interpretation of all other writings, has been grossly disregarded and contemned in the interpretation of scripture. If one should interpret any other writings (except those in the exact sciences) in the same manner in which the scriptures have been explained, he might find as many absurdities in the former, as there are pretended mysteries in the latter.

Upon the principle just stated, we may reject the literal meaning of a passage, even where we cannot pronounce with confidence, what is its true meaning. The words of our Saviour just quoted, are an example in point. One may be fully justified in rejecting their literal meaning, who is wholly unable to determine their true meaning. To do this is certainly no easy matter. Similar difficulties, that is, passages about the true meaning of which we can feel no confidence, though we may confidently reject some particular meaning which the words will bear, are to be found in all other ancient writings as well as the scriptures.

If the facts and principles respecting interpretation which we have stated are correct, any one who will examine what has been written concerning this subject, may perceive how little it has been understood by a large proportion of those who have undertaken to lay down rules of exposition, and how much it has been involved in obscurity and error. There are many writers, who appear neither to have had any distinct conception of the truth, that sentences are continually occurring, which may severally express very different senses, *when we attend only to the words of which they are composed;* nor, of consequence, any just notions of the manner in which the meaning of such sentences is to be determined. Yet, it is to such sentences that the art of interpretation is particularly applicable; and its main purpose is, to teach us in what manner their ambiguity may be resolved.

With regard to the passages adduced in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, they have been interpreted, we conceive,

upon no general principles, or upon none which can be at all defended. But the same is true of these, as of other passages in scripture. Many readers have been taught from their childhood to associate a certain meaning with certain words and texts in the Bible. This meaning, borrowed from the schools of technical theology, may be altogether erroneous, but it is that which immediately presents itself to their minds. They can hardly avoid considering those expositions of particular passages with which they are so familiar, as the only ones which would occur to an unprejudiced reader. He who would break those associations which they have between certain words and a certain meaning, and substitute the true sense instead of that to which they have been accustomed, appears to them to be doing violence to the language of scripture. We make these remarks, merely for the sake of showing, that the *strong impression*, which some may feel respecting the meaning of different passages, being the result merely of education and habit, and not founded upon any correct principle of judgment, is of no sort of weight in the present controversy.

We may now, then, proceed to answer the question formerly proposed. Certain passages are adduced by Trinitarians and explained in one sense; we explain the same passages in a different sense. The question is, in what manner it shall be decided which explanation is true, or which is most probable. Now, upon the supposition that the words will bear either meaning, this is a question, which, as we have shown, is to be determined solely by extrinsic considerations; and all those considerations, which we have urged in the former part of this article, bear directly upon the point at issue. Our purpose has been to prove, that the doctrines of Trinitarians were not taught by Christ and his apostles. In so far as we have rendered this probable, we have rendered it probable, that they were not taught by them in any particular passage. All the considerations which we have brought forward, are such as apply directly to the interpretation of every passage which may be adduced. But these considerations are in our mind of so much weight, as to render it certain, that the Trinitarian exposition of every genuine passage of the New Testament is false. Their force can be avoided only in one way, not by proving, positively, that the words will bear a Trinitarian meaning—for we have, all along, for the sake of argument, granted upon this supposition—but by proving, negatively, that it is impossible they should have been used in any other than a Trinitarian meaning;—that the words will bear but one sense, and that this is the only sense, which they could have been

intended to express. The latter proposition, when thus stated in express terms, no one, we think, acquainted with criticism, will undertake to maintain in respect to these passages in general, or in respect to any particular passage. If it should be advanced, it may easily be shown to be wholly untenable. But if this be true, and if there be not some gross error in our preceding reasonings, then the controversy, with regard to the Trinitarian exposition of these passages, is already decided. Whatever may be their true sense, the Trinitarian exposition must be false.

It does not indeed follow from this, that the particular meaning, which we, or any Unitarian expositor may assign to a passage, is its true meaning. Because one meaning that has been assigned is certainly false, we cannot conclude that another, which the words will bear, must be that which the author intended. Whether it be, or be not, is to be determined by the general considerations just adverted to, together with such other particular considerations, as may specially apply to the passage before us. With regard to some one or more of these passages, a student of the scriptures may, perhaps, hesitate between different Unitarian expositions, without perceiving any sufficient reasons to decide his choice. The case is the same with regard to many other passages of scripture, in examining which we may discover different probable meanings, but cannot confidently determine the true meaning. But however much he may be perplexed in determining the true sense of a passage, this will be no reason for adopting one which may be proved not to be the true sense. He would reason very ill, who, because he could not satisfy himself as to what was meant by our Saviour, when he spoke of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, should adopt on that account the Roman Catholic exposition of his words. If there be any texts adduced by Trinitarians, concerning the true meaning of which the student of the controversy can obtain no satisfaction, he may recollect that these are not the only difficult passages in scripture; that one must have studied with very little, or very great attention, who does not recognize many of a similar character; and that we must not give up what we know, because there is something which we do not know; or sacrifice the clear explicit tenor of all the rest of scripture to the possible meaning of some texts which appear to contradict it.

But in all this reasoning, we have gone upon a very liberal supposition, when we have conceded generally that the passages adduced by Trinitarians will BEAR a Trinitarian sense. Of many of these passages, as we have formerly shown, this

supposition is not true. They contain declarations and expressions, on which no meaning can be put, which is not altogether inconsistent, as it seems to us, with the doctrines they are brought to establish. Some of the passages last referred to, do, indeed, at the same time, contain other expressions, which, considered alone, admit a sense favourable to the Trinitarian doctrine that Christ is God; and there are a few texts which will bear such a meaning throughout. We shall not undertake to give a general explanation of them, for they have already been often explained, and the Unitarian expositions may be found in books sufficiently common. But we shall endeavour to afford some assistance to our readers, who are not familiar with the controversy, by stating several heads or classes, to which we think the proofs from scripture, which have been principally urged by Trinitarians in modern times, may be referred; and under each head, shall remark upon one or two texts which have been most insisted upon, or which may seem to present most difficulty.

I. To the first class, we may refer *interpolated or corrupted passages*. Such as Acts xx. 28, where in the common version we find these words: "to feed the church OF GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Instead of "the church of God," the true reading is "the church of the Lord." 1 Tim. iii. 10. "God was manifest in the flesh;" where instead of Θεος (God,) the true reading is either ὁ (which,) or ὃς (who, or he who.) And the famous text of the *three heavenly witnesses*, 1 John v. 7. This text was formerly considered as the strong hold of the Trinitarian system. The value attached to it, as a proof passage, may be estimated from the obstinacy with which it was long retained, so that it even now keeps its place in the editions of the common version; from the lingering glances which are still cast toward it by such writers as Middleton;* from the pertinacity with which the more ignorant class of controversialists continue to quote it; and from the ill will which is manifested toward Griesbach, on account of his having freed the text of his New Testament from this interpolation, and the other corruptions which we have mentioned.

II. *Passages relating to Christ which have been mistranslated.* To this class belongs Phil. ii. 5. seqq. Here the common version makes the apostle say of Christ, that he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This has

* The author of the Doctrine of the Greek Article. See his note on the text.

been considered as a decisive argument, that Christ is God; though it seems, at first sight, a mere absurdity, to say of any being, that "he thought it not robbery to be equal with himself." Perhaps no text, however, has been more frequently quoted, or referred to.* It is now conceded that the passage is incorrectly rendered. But Professor Stuart, though he allows this, still thinks the text of too much value to be given up; and by retaining a part of the old mistranslation (supposing ισα to denote *equality*, instead of *likeness*) and substituting a new one instead of that which is lost (understanding μορφη to mean *being* or *nature*†) he has contrived to press it again into service. The exact verbal rendering of εν μορφη Θεου is "*in the form of God*," and of εν μορφη δουλου, "*in the form of a servant*." But as neither of these phrases correspond to our common modes of expression, they can hardly convey any distinct meaning to most readers. In a translation of the passage, it would be better therefore to substitute equivalent, but more intelligible phrases. The following translation, we believe, fully conveys the sense of the original.

"Let the same dispositions [of humility and benevolence] be in you which were in Jesus Christ; who being the image of God, did not think his likeness to God, a thing to be eagerly

* Thus Dr. Watts says in one of his hymns (B. II. h. 51.)

Yet there is one of human frame,
Jesus arrayed in flesh and blood,
Thinks it no robbery to claim
A full equality with God.

Their glory shines with equal beams, &c.

† In his translation of the passage, Professor Stuart indeed renders this word, "*condition*;" but as he afterward (p. 96) insists, in reference to this passage, that it means "*nature*" or "*being*," we suppose he must consider the word, *condition*, as synonymous with the two latter. This is not quite conformable to common usage; and with regard to this particular passage, there has been a wide distinction made between them. Elsner (in his *Observationes Sacræ*) after observing, that *the Socinians with Grotius and Le Clerc* understand μορφη in this passage to mean nothing more than *condition*, undertakes to show, *in opposition* to them, that it means *nature, essence, internal form*.

After examining the authorities quoted by Elsner and Schleusner, we are not quite satisfied that μορφη ever has this latter meaning in profane writers. But we are fully satisfied, that it never has this meaning in the Greek of the Septuagint and New Testament. If such were the case, we should only have to choose between this and its more common meaning.

Ισος is used sometimes to denote *equality*, and sometimes *likeness*. The reasons which determine us to adopt the latter signification in the present passage, are sufficiently obvious.

retained, but lowered himself, and took the appearance of a s
vant, and became like men ;* and being† in the common con
tion of a man, he humbled himself, and submitted to dea
even the death of the cross."

We believe, that the original passage affords no more pr
of the Trinity, than the translation which we have just giv
Christ was in the form of God, or was the image of God,
account of the authority delegated to him as the messenger
God to men, the divine power committed to him of performi
miracles ; and because as an instructer he spoke in the na
of God, as he was taught by God. Yet notwithstanding
bore this high character, he was not eager to assume it for
sake of any personal distinction, rank, or splendour, or
obtain any other personal gratification. He lowered himsel
the condition of common men ; lived in similar circumstan
to theirs, and submitted to similar deprivations, and sufferi
When it is affirmed, that he took the appearance of a serv
these words are illustrated by what is said by our Saviour h
self, in inculcating, like the apostle, the virtue of humility, w
the same reference, as is here made, to his own examp
"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but
minister." It is in imitation of this example, that he dir
him who would be reatest among his disciples, to become
servant of all.

To the class of mistranslated passages, are, we think, l
wise to be referred several, where, in the common vers
mention is made of "*calling on the name of Christ.*"
these the following may serve as a specimen:

1 Cor. i. 2. "Unto the church of God, which is at Cori
to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be sa
*with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Ch
our Lord.*"

Of the last words, we believe, that one or the other of
following renderings is correct :—

*With all who in every place take upon themselves the n
of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Or, *With all who in every place are called by the nam
our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The words will bear either rendering ; and it is not w
while to discuss in this place which is most probable. T

* Literally, "*becoming in the likeness of men :*" a Hebraism.

† Ευρεθεις equivalent to ων ; according to a well known use of ωρισκομ

*called by the name of a person*, in the sense of belonging to, or being devoted to that person, is a phrase of common occurrence in the scriptures. Similar passages to that just quoted are to be explained in a similar manner.

Under this head, are likewise to be placed those passages, which, on account of the omission of the Greek article, have been so translated as to apply to Christ the title of God. These we believe to be correctly rendered in the common version.*

III. *Passages relating to God which have been incorrectly applied to Christ.* Under this head we place the conclusion of Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

The last clause, we believe, is improperly referred to Christ. The words may be pointed, and rendered in the following manner:—

"And of whom was Christ according to the flesh.† May he who is over all, God, be blessed forever."

The objection to this explanation and rendering is, that in other similar expressions in scripture, the word, Blessed, always commences the sentence, as is common in English. The answer to this is, that it is to God as the author and head of the Jewish dispensation, as over all those things just mentioned, that St. Paul utters this expression of devout acknowledgement; and that the reference to God, *considered under this particular character*, would be lost by any different arrangement of the words. If the word answering to *Blessed* were to commence the sentence, the effect in the Greek would be the same as in the following rendering of what would then be the arrangement; *blessed be God who is over all, forever and ever;* which would be a mere general ascription of praise to God, as presiding over the universe; and not a particular

* The able tract of the Rev. Calvin Winstanley, containing a satisfactory defence of the common rendering, will shortly be republished, being now in the press of Hilliard and Metcalf, Cambridge.

† That is "*by natural descent.*" With regard to this phrase, concerning which a difficulty has been raised, see its use in the third verse of this chapter; "my kinsmen according to the flesh," i. e. by natural relationship; and in the 8th verse, "the children according to the flesh," i. e. by natural descent. Observe likewise the very common uses of the phrase elsewhere.

expression of gratitude to him, as the author and head of the Jewish dispensation.*

But there is another mode of understanding the passage, which is not liable to any objection on the ground of an unusual construction. It is well known, that the present pointing of the New Testament is of no authority, a fact indeed which we have just implied. Let any one now turn to the passage in his Greek Testament, and put a dot at the top of the line

*We may observe that the mode of constructing the passage given above, is not that on which Professor Stuart particularly remarks, and which he attributes to a Professor Justi, though it was long ago proposed by Locke. In commenting on this passage, Professor Stuart has taken what he says about "Greek usage" from Middleton's note upon the text, in his work concerning the Greek Article; and has, at the same time, fallen into a considerable mistake from not rightly apprehending what he found in that author. In consequence of some slight obscurity in the manner in which Middleton expresses himself, Professor Stuart has been led to believe, that Wetstein proposed a conjectural reading of the words in question, for the sake of avoiding the Trinitarian sense, and he thus writes in consequence:

"Wetstein's conjecture, that it should be read ὁ ων, ὁ επι παντων Θεος, is not any more fortunate. Such a mode of expression, as ὁ ων ὁ, all relating to the same subject, is repugnant to Greek usage. Besides, this conjecture, like that of Schlichting, not only violates the integrity of the text but assigns the article to Θεος, and omits it before ευλογητος; which is surely inadmissible."—*Stuart's Letters*, p. 79.

The case is extremely different from what Professor Stuart supposes. Wetstein offers no conjecture upon the verse. What he says is, that "if St. Paul had meant to express the sense which some [i. e. the orthodox] suppose, he would rather have written ὁ ων ὁ επι παντων," κ. τ. λ. Wetstein gives certain words, which he thinks St. Paul would have used if he had intended to express himself, as Trinitarians suppose that he does; and Professor Stuart believes these words a conjecture, made for the purpose of avoiding the Trinitarian exposition. We do not comprehend what meaning he imagined that they would bear, when he wrote under this impression.

With Wetstein's New Testament, which Professor Stuart thus quotes at second hand, and quotes incorrectly, a professed theological critic should have been better acquainted. Of this work, Bishop Marsh says, in one of his controversial tracts, "Every man, who is at all conversant with philological inquiries, knows that Wetstein's notes to the Greek Testament contain a very copious collection of passages from Greek authors, made in order to illustrate the meaning of words in the Greek Testament; and that when a question arises about the meaning of a word in the Greek Testament, it is as usual to recur to the examples collected by Wetstein as it is to the examples in Johnson's Dictionary, when the meaning of an English word is disputed." Illustrations of his hypothesis, &c. Appendix, sect. II.

(equivalent to a colon or semicolon) after σαρκα, and a comma after παντων, and he will perceive that the following meaning immediately results.

"He who is (or was) over all is God blessed forever."

"He who is over all," that is, over all which has just been mentioned. The rapidity of expression in the original, however, is not fully represented by such a rendering, because in our language we are obliged to supply the ellipsis of the substantive verb. It may be imitated, however, by employing the participle instead of the verb; and translating thus:—

"Who are Israelites, whose was the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of the temple, and the promises, whose were the fathers, and of whom was Christ according to the flesh; he who was over all, being God blessed forever."*

This conclusion, as every one must perceive, is in the highest degree proper and natural. Among the privileges and distinctions of the Jews, it could not be forgotten by the apostle that God had presided over all their concerns in a particular manner. With regard to the ellipsis of the substantive verb, which we have supposed, nothing is more common. In the five verses, including the verse we are considering (between the 3d and 9th) it occurs at least six times.

Many Trinitarian writers have been disposed to imply at least, very strongly, that the words, according to the common idiom of the Greek language, necessarily demand a Trinitarian rendering and exposition.† We think we have shown this pretence to be wholly unfounded. But we happen to have it in our power to give what appears to us a perfectly decisive answer to it of a different kind. The opinions of the early orthodox fathers, were such (as we have before stated) that they could not, and never did, even when most desirous of elevating his character, apply to Christ the title of "God over all." On the contrary, some of their number have expressly

* We believe that the verbs in this passage should be in the past time, and have accordingly so given them in the translation above, though before, in conformity to the common rendering, we have employed the present; but this is a point which does not effect the question at issue.

† Thus Professor Stuart says of the only Unitarian exposition on which he remarks at length, "that Greek usage by no possibility admits of it;" leaving his reader to infer, that Greek usage by no possibility admits of any Unitarian exposition.

denied that this title belongs to him. It was applied to l
by the Sabellians, and was considered as a distinguishing m
of their heresy. There is no one of the fathers more emin
than Origen. "Supposing," says Origen in his work agai
Celsus, "that some among the multitude of believers, likely
they are to have differences of opinion, rashly suppose t
the Saviour is God over all; yet we do not, for we believe l
when he said, 'The Father who sent me is greater than I.'
After the Nicene council, this title began to be applied. I
subsequent to this time, Eusebius, in writing against Marcel
says: "As Marcellus thinks, He who was born of the b
virgin, and clothed in flesh, who dwelt among men, and suffe
what had been foretold, and died for our sins, was the v
God over all; for daring to say which, the church of G
numbered Sabellius among atheists and blasphemers."† N
it is incredible that the text in question should have been ov
looked. But the early fathers in making these, and a multitu
of other similar declarations, concerning the inferiority of
Son to the Father, never advert to it. The conclusion is ir
sistible, either that the text did not exist in their copies in
present form, a conclusion which we are very far from be
disposed to maintain; or, that they found no difficulty in
plaining it in a similar manner to that in which we underst
it. It would be a rather bold step for the sake of saving
Trinitarian exposition, to charge the Greek fathers with ig
rance of the idiom of their own language.

We pass to Hebrews i. 10—12. It is unnecessary to g
the words at length. This passage, we believe, belongs to
present class. The words, as we think, were originally
dressed by the Psalmist (Ps. cii. 25.) not to Christ, but to G
and are so addressed by the author of the Epistle.‡

* Origen. cont. Cels. VIII. p. 387. See Wetstein.

† Euseb. Eccles. Theol. ii. 4. This and the passage from Origen
given by Wetstein in his critical remarks on the text, with other auth
ties to the same purpose. See also Whithy Disquisitiones Modestæ,
*sim*, but particularly pp. 26. 27 p. 122 and p. 197. Ed. Secund.—
placing a period after *ουχι*. Griesbach quotes the authority of "m
fathers who denied that Christ could be called 'God over all.'"

‡ The following are the remarks of Emlyn. "Here we may observe, t
the tenth verse, *And thou Lord. &c* (though it is a new citation) is not
faced with, *And, to the Son he saith*. as ver. 8., or with an *again*, as ver
and so chap. ii. 13. but barely, *And thou Lord*. Now the God last menti
was Christ's God, who had anointed him; and the author thereupon bre
out into the celebration of this God's power, and especially his unchan

IV. In the next place, we shall mention one passage, (there is no other of a precisely similar kind,) which, as we believe, has been misunderstood from ignorance or inattention to the opinions and modes of conception, which the writer, St. John, had in mind. This is the commencement of his gospel.

"In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God."

There is, we conceive, no word in English answering to the Greek word, *Logos*, as here used. It was employed to denote a mode of conception concerning the Deity, familiar at the time when St. John wrote, but which has long since passed away, and to which, with our common apprehensions, we may not be able readily to accommodate our minds. It denoted *his power considered as in action*, his power as exercised in creation, and in his extraordinary manifestations of himself to his creatures. This power, the Logos of God, was personified by some in the use of a rhetorical figure; but by others, it was conceived of as residing in, and exercised by and through another being distinct from God, and intermediate between him and his creatures. We have an example of rhetorical personification, or of the attributing of proper personality to the Logos, in the apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon (xviii. 15.) where the writer, speaking of the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians, says:

able duration; which he dwells upon, as what he principally cites the text for; in order, I conceive, to prove the stability of the Son's kingdom, before spoken of: *Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; God, thy God, has anointed thee*; *and thou, Lord*, i. e. thou who hast promised him such a throne, *art he who laid the foundation of the earth*, and made the heavens, which, though of long and permanent duration, yet will perish; *but thou remainest, thou art the same, thy years shall not fail.* So that it seems to be a declaration of God's immutability made here, to ascertain the durableness of Christ's kingdom, before mentioned; and the rather so, because this passage had been used originally for the same purpose in the 102d Psalm, viz. to infer thence this conclusion, ver. ult. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed be established before thee.* In like manner it here proves the *Son's* throne should be established for *ever and ever*, by the same argument, viz. by God's immutability; and so was very pertinently alleged of God, without being applied to the Son; to show how able *his God*, who had anointed him, was to make good and maintain what he had granted him, viz. a durable kingdom *for ever.*"—*Emlyn's Examination of Dr. Bennet's New Theory of the Trinity.* Tracts, vol. II pp. 203, 204. London, 1731.

Beside the purpose pointed out by Emlyn, the author of the Epistle may have had another in view, which was to declare, that while the throne of Christ being upheld by God should endure forever; the heavens, the local habitation, as they were considered, of angels, should, on the contrary, perish; be rolled up as a garment and changed.





"Thine almighty Word (Logos) leapt down from his re
throne,* a fierce warrior, into the midst of a land of desti
tion."

This book was written more than a century before the bi
of our Saviour.

There is, we think, satisfactory evidence that this notion
a personal Logos was familiar in the time of St. John; i
probably had begun to be regarded with a favourable eye
many Christians. We perceive what a near approach, to
the least, had been made to it even at the time when the W
dom of Solomon was composed. It was the doctrine of Ph
the celebrated Platonizing Jew, who wrote long before
John, and whose philosophical opinions were probably
same with those of many of his age and nation. His author
must have given a powerful support and sanction to the d
trine, among the more learned of his own countrymen, as
find that it afterwards did among the Christian fathers;
whom his works were read and admired, and quoted. W
may easily suppose St. John to have become acquainted w
a popular doctrine, and with a common use of the word Log
without believing that he derived his knowledge directly fr
the writings of Philo. Indeed we can hardly suppose him
have been ignorant on these subjects.

This doctrine had really its origin in the Platonic philo
phy. But from an *accidental* coincidence of expression,
would appear to a Jew or Christian, who had learnt it from t
philosophy, to derive strong support from the Old Testame
One meaning of the term, *Logos*, in Greek, is *word*. N
though it was not in reference to this meaning, that the te
was originally used to designate the Divine power by the P
tonists, yet it happens that the divine power and agency
continually denoted in the Old Testament by the expressi
Logos, *word*. "By the WORD of the Lord, the heavens we
made." "The WORD of the Lord came unto me," say t
prophets; &c. The examples of the use which we have me
tioned, must be familiar to every reader.

But the term, *Logos*, was used to denote a supposed bei
not merely by the Platonists, those who held the opinions
Philo, but likewise by a very early sect of Christian heretic
the Gnostics, who were probably contemporary with St. Jo
They gave the name of Logos to one of that class of bei
whom they called *Æons*. It does not appear, however, th

* This we conceive to be the proper rendering, not "*thy* royal throne
as in the common version. In the original there is no pronoun.

their notions concerning the Logos corresponded much with those of the school of Philo. But in one point they and the Platonists appear to have agreed:—in not believing the personal existence of the Logos to have been, properly speaking, from eternity. That the Gnostics did not hold this belief, we have the testimony of Irenæus, from whom we derive our principal knowledge of their doctrines; nor do we suppose it to have been the opinion of any, who, at the time when St. John wrote, regarded the Logos as a person.

The doctrine concerning the Logos, as a being distinct from God, and intermediate between Him and his creatures, was the embryo form of the Christian Trinity. The writings of Philo, by whom it was taught, were, as we have said, a favorite study of the Christian fathers. This doctrine, we believe, *it was one purpose of St. John to oppose in the introduction of his Gospel.* Using the word, *Logos*, in what had become a common signification of the term, namely, to denote the power of God as displayed in creation, and in his manifestations of himself to his creatures; he, at the same time, denies that it is resident in, or exercised by or through any inferior and intermediate being. He teaches, that it is to be referred immediately to God himself. "*In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God;*" that is to say, the Logos was always with God;—what is properly expressed by this term is, that divine power, which has been always, and has been always with God. "*And the Logos was God;*" that is, this divine power is to be referred immediately to God; the term is not to be understood as denoting any other being.

With the views which we have given, the explanation of the rest of the passage is easy. It is not improbable, however, that in what follows, St. John may have alluded to other errors beside those which we have mentioned. The Gnostics gave the names of Light and Life as well as that of Logos, to distinct beings, *Æons.* St. John, by a different use of these terms, irreconcilable with the use which they made of them, probably intended to refer to and condemn their error.

We shall notice particularly but one other clause: "*And the Logos became flesh.*" This seems to us no very harsh figure to denote what we believe to have been intended,—that the divine power was manifested in a human form through Jesus Christ. But if there should seem to be any difficulty in this expression, it may assist our conceptions to know, that according to a common use of the term Logos, it might be applied to any being through whom the divine power was strikingly

manifested. Thus Philo calls Moses *the divine Logos*,* a
the high priest, *a Logos*.† He uses the term as synonymo
with prophet;‡ and applies it to angels, who, he says, we
commonly called by this name.§

If our view of the proem of St. John's Gospel be correct,
is remarkable enough, that it is now brought to support th
very doctrine, the introduction of which it was intended
oppose.‖

The *early* Christian fathers, when, following Philo, th
gave a personal existence to the Logos; applied to him,
Philo had done before, the title of God, though in a very in
rior sense. Upon the passage where St. John says, that "t
Logos was God," they remarked, that the term God is he
used without the article; and though, with it, it could den
only the Supreme Being, yet without it, it might be given
the Logos, as implying only an inferior degree of divinity.¶

V. Another class of texts which has been adduced
Trinitarians, consists of *passages in which the expressi
are very bold and figurative, and which have been interpre
without regard to this character.*

* Migrat. Abrah. p. 401.—al. Opp. T. I. p. 449. Edit. Mangey.

† Ib. p. 404—al. I. 452. ‡ Deus Immut. p. 313—al. I. 293.

§ Migrat. Abrah. p. 415—al. I. 463. We are referred to these pass
by Stephen Nye, in his Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, pp. 74, 75.

‖ The explanation, which we have given, is essentially the same with
of Le Clerc. See his Commentary on the New Testament, and the 8th
9th of his Epistolæ Criticæ. Respecting the statements which we
made, and the explanation of the passage in general, the following w
may likewise be consulted. Bryant's Sentiments of Philo Judæus
cerning the Λογος, or Word of God. Bruckeri Hist. Phil. Tom. II. pp.
811. Stephen Nye's Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, pp. 70—81.
Lond. 1701. Dr. Priestley's notes and paraphrase on the passage
Notes on Scripture; and his account of the opinions of Philo, in his
tory of Early Opinions concerning Christ, vol. II. Michaelis' Introd
to the New Testament by Marsh; the part which treats of St. J
Gospel. Souverain, Le Platonisme Devoilé. Eichhorn's Einleitu
das N. T. B. II. s. 158—181. We have referred to writers whose op
are in many respects different from each other, and from our own; b
cannot help thinking that a fair comparison of them will result in
lishing the essential correctness of the explanation which we have
It should be observed, however, that a very different interpreta
the passage has been proposed and ably defended by some Uni
critics. For this, the reader may consult Cappe's Critical Rema
Scripture, vol. I., and Simpson's Additional Essays on the Langu
Scripture. Essay VII.

¶ Origen Comment. in Joan. Opp. T. iv. pp. 50. 51. Edit. Delar

The most remarkable is Colossians i. 15—17. where, speaking of Christ, the apostle says, that he is

"The image of the Invisible God, the first born of the whole creation; for by him were all things created, those in Heaven, and those upon earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or governments, or powers, all were created through him and for him; and he is over all; and all exist by him; (*or*, are holden together by him.)"

The moral renovation of men by Christianity is repeatedly spoken of by St. Paul under the figure of a new creation, as in the following passages:

"If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE; (or, there is a new creation.) *The old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.*" 2 Cor. v. 17.

"For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE;" (or, perhaps more properly, "but there is a new creation.)" Gal. vi. 15.

"For we are his (God's) workmanship, CREATED in Christ Jesus unto good works." Eph. ii. 10.

"Put on the new man, who is CREATED according to [the likeness of] God, in righteousness and true holiness." Ephes. iv. 24.

The language in the passage from Colossians, on which we are remarking, is to be explained, we conceive, conformably to that in the passages just quoted, and to other similar expressions in the New Testament. It has been conceived to declare, that the *natural creation* was the work of Christ. But it may be remarked at first sight, that the terms used are not such as properly designate the objects of the *natural world*; and not such, therefore, as we should expect to be employed, if these were intended.* In speaking of the natural creation, the same apostle refers it to God in different terms,—to "the Living God who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them."†

The words *thrones*, *dominions*, &c. undoubtedly mean, 'those who sit on thrones,' 'those who exercise dominion,' &c. whether the latter expressions are to be understood figuratively or literally. By a substitution then of these, and of some other expressions which we regard as perfectly equivalent to those of the original, but more conformable to our com-

* Professor Stuart appears to have had some feeling of this; for he has given in his letters a very free rendering of the passage. See Letters, pp. 71, 72.

† Acts xiv. 15.

mon use of language, we may convey the sense, which we b
lieve the apostle intended, in the following terms:

"For to him all things (in the Christian world) owe the
origin, the highest and the lowest,* what is seen, and what is n
seen, those who sit on thrones, those who exercise dominio
those who have government, and those who have power. H
is the author and master of all; he is over all, and all exi
through him; (or, have a common relation to him.)"

But what is meant by those who sit on thrones, those wh
exercise dominion, &c.? We answer, those who hold the hig
est offices and sustain the highest character in the new dispens
tion; all those most dignified and excellent among the followe
of the new religion. The Christian dispensation is continual
spoken of under the figure of a kingdom; and it is in referen
to this figure, that these expressions are used. Thus Chr
tians in general are called by St. Peter, "a *royal* priesthood

But further, it may help to reconcile us to this figure,
know that the titles, *thrones, dominions,* &c. were the sam
or similar to those, which the Jews gave to their Rabbies
teachers. This fact is shown at length by Schoettgen, a cri
very eminent for his knowledge of Rabbinical learning, a
of unsuspected orthodoxy.† St. Paul, therefore, in using t
language, merely adopted and applied to the more emin
among Christians, modes of expression, commonly applied
his countrymen to the more eminent among themselves.
elsewhere uses the terms, *governments* (ἀρχαὶ) and *pow*
(ἐξουσίαι) concerning Heathen rulers.‡

But, in any case, this passage cannot be understood of
creation of the natural world. This is the work of God.
the person here spoken of is not God, but "the image of G
and the first born of every creature." It is not of God tha
is said (in the 18th verse) that "he is the first born from
dead;" or (in the 19th) "that it pleased the Father that
him should all fulness dwell."

VI. But a large proportion of the passages adduced
support the doctrine of the Trinity, are *passages misin*
*preted through a disregard of the common style of expres*

* "The things in heaven and the things on earth:" It is a commo
pression in the scriptures, as elsewhere, to speak of any thing beir
heaven, or being exalted to heaven, to denote its being highly exalte

† See Schoettgen's Notes on Matth. vii. 29. Ephes. i. 21, and C
ii. 10. in his Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ.

‡ Tit. III. 1. Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

*in the scriptures.* They are not of a character to present any difficulty to an intelligent and unprejudiced reader, who has made himself familiar with this style; who has attended to its peculiarities; who is in the habit of comparing expressions used in one place with the same or similar expressions when they recur in another; and who, availing himself of the best means in his power of interpreting the Sacred Books, reads them in the same exercise of his judgment with which he reads all other writings.

VII. But in the last place, many of the arguments of Trinitarians are founded upon *passages understood without any regard to the most obvious characteristics of language, or the most common rules respecting its interpretation.* Thus, for instance, we find in such books as Jones' Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, arguments which really go upon the assumption that the same word is always used in the same sense; and which, if this assumption be not granted, fall at once to the ground.

We have thus explained our opinions on the subject in controversy. If these opinions be true, we have no doubt that they will finally prevail. In our country especially, where truth has nothing but error to contend with, and is not borne down, as it has been almost every where else, by civil and ecclesiastical power, they must prevail. The great point is to impress those who hold correct opinions with a sense of their importance;—of the importance of presenting Christianity to men such as it really is. *He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.** We regard with the highest satisfaction the exertions, which have been made, and are making in our more southern cities; and consider the disinterested and generous sacrifices of some individuals, with which we have become acquainted, as worthy of all praise. It is not an object of light value which they have in view, and they have given proof, that they *feel* it is not.

Before concluding, we wish to say a word or two respecting our general views of religion; those views, the great characteristics of which Mr. Channing has so ably and eloquently explained and defended in the Sermon, which has given occasion to Professor Stuart's Letters. We are charged with depriving Christianity of all its value; of rejecting every thing but its name. Christianity, WE BELIEVE, has taught the Unity

* Jeremiah xxiii. 28. These words were prefixed by the *Confessor* Emlyn to one of his publications.

of God, and revealed him as the Father of his creatures. It has made known his infinite perfections, his providence, and moral government. It has directed us to look up to Him as the Being, on whom we and all things are entirely dependent, and to look up to Him with perfect confidence and love. It has made known to us that we are to live forever; it has brought life and immortality to light. Man was a creature of this earth, and it has raised him to a far nobler rank, and taught him to regard himself as an immortal being, and the child of God. It has opened to the sinner the path of penitence and hope. It has afforded to virtue the highest possible sanctions. It gives to sorrow its best and often its only consolation. It has presented us in the life of our great Master with an example of that moral perfection, which is to be the constant object of our exertions. It has established the truths, which it teaches, upon evidence the most satisfactory. It is a most glorious display of the benevolence of God, and of his care for his creatures of this earth. But all this, it seems, is NOTHING;—unless it have also taught, that there are three persons who constitute the one God; or at least that there is some threefold distinction, we know not what, in the Divinity; and further, unless it also teach that one of these persons or distinctions was united in a most incomprehensible manner to the human nature of Christ, so that the sufferings of the latter were the sufferings of the former it being well understood, at the same time, that the former could not suffer. The religion of joy and consolation, THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD, will, it is thought, lose more than half its value, unless it have announced to us, that we are created under the wrath and curse of God;* that it is impossible for us to perform his will unless our moral natures be created anew; and that this is a favour denied to far the greater part of men, who are required to perform, what he has made it morally impossible they should perform, with the most unrelenting rigour, and under penalty of the most terrible and everlasting torments. Such intelligible and comfortable doctrines as these are represented as the *peculiar* doctrines of Christianity; those from which it derives its value; and our opponents seem to think, that if nothing better was to be effected than to make God known to men, to reveal to them his paternal character, to bring life and immortality to light, and to furnish the highest motives to virtue, it was hardly worth while for the

* "The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse, so as we are BY NATURE children of wrath, bond-slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world and in that which is to come." *Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism.*

Deity to interpose in a special manner to effect purposes so unimportant.

The doctrines which we believe to be doctrines of Christianity, are doctrines of inestimable value. The question of their truth is one in which we are interested most deeply. Our happiness and our virtue are at stake on the decision. If they are not true, we are miserable indeed. The brute, satisfied with the enjoyments of the present day, has a preferable tenure of existence to man, if they are both to perish together. But if they are true, there is a prospect displayed before us inconceivably glorious and delightful. They are truths which it was worthy of God to teach. Look now at the doctrines which we are opposing. Are these doctrines considered in themselves of so very much importance or value? It may, for aught we know, be important to believe them, if they are true. That is a different question. What we ask is, whether it is very important or desirable that they should be true. Is it very important to our virtue and happiness, that there should be a threefold distinction in the divine nature; or that the mercy of God which is extended towards us, should have been PURCHASED with the blood of his Son? Is it desirable for us to be satisfied that our natures are so depraved, that, till they are changed by the act of God, we can do nothing to please him? Examine the creeds of what is called Orthodoxy; and read the summary of obligations which these creeds teach us, that we lie under to God as our MAKER. What obligations would be due from his creatures to a being who had formed them under his "displeasure and curse," made them "bond slaves to Satan," and "JUSTLY LIABLE (the absurdity is as gross as the impiety) to all punishments in this world, and in that which is to come." With what feelings might such creatures justly regard their Maker? What is the character which they would have a right to ascribe to him? It would be mockery to ask, if it were desirable that this doctrine should be true; or if Christianity would lose much of its value, if it should appear that it taught no such doctrine.

Oh no! these are not doctrines of the gospel; and it is because we have some feeling of the inestimable value of our religion, and some desire to promote its influence, that we wish men to believe that these are not doctrines of the gospel. It is because we feel that God ought to be the object of our most perfect veneration and love, that we revolt at doctrines which confound and darken our ideas of his nature, which represent one person in the Divinity as exacting, and another as submitting to the punishment of our offences; and at other

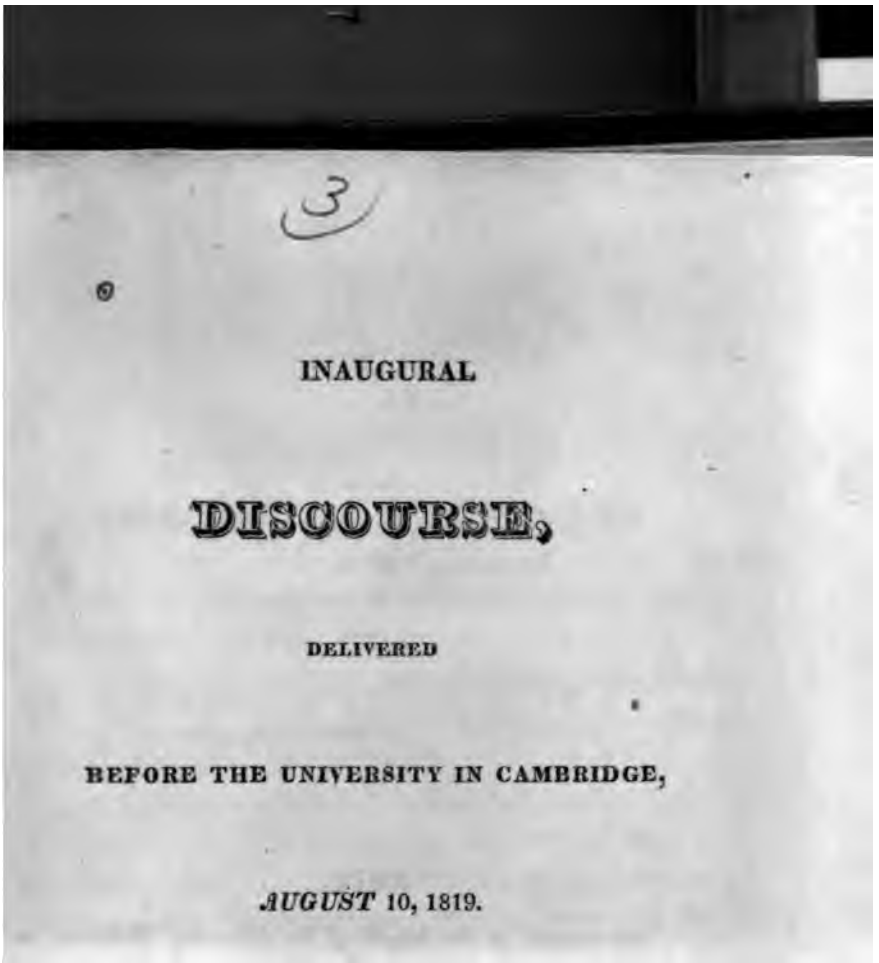
doctrines far worse than these, which, if it were possible for them to have their full influence upon the mind, would make God an object of utter horror and detestation. We believe that the great truths of religion, which are taught by Christianity, are the foundation of public and private happiness, of the good order of well regulated society, of purity of morals, of domestic comfort, of all that is most generous and most disinterested in the human character, of all those qualities which endear man to man; that they make life tolerable and reconcile us to death; and that it is on these, that the character must be formed, which will fit us for heaven;—and it is, THEREFORE, that we wish them to be presented to men such as they really are, free from all the gross errors which human folly and perversity have connected with them,—errors, which have prevented their reception, and essentially counteracted their influence.

THE END.


Inaugural
NORTON'S DISCOURSE.







INAUGURAL

# DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY IN CAMBRIDGE,

*AUGUST* 10, 1819.

.....

BY ANDREWS NORTON,

Dexter Professor of Sacred Literature.

.....

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# CONSTITUTION AND RULES

OF THE

# THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

THE Theological Department or Faculty of Theology of the University, shall consist of a President and the following Professors.

1. The Alford Professor of Natural and Moral Philosophy, who shall lecture in these subjects according to the statutes of the Professorship, and the regulations established, hereto, by the College law.

2. The Hollis Professor of Divinity, who shall give instruction to the theological students in positive and controversial divinity, including the evidences, and principles of natural religion, and the evidences, doctrines, and duties of revealed religion: said Professor performing all the duties of the Hollis Professorship which he holds.

3. The Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental Languages, who is to give instruction in those languages, and in their application to the interpretation of the scriptures.

4. A Professor of Sacred Literature, or expository theology, who shall treat of the criticism and interpretation of the scriptures.

5. A Professor of Pastoral Theology, who shall give instruction in the duties of the pastoral office, and the composition and delivery of sermons.





6. A Professor who shall treat of sacred and ecclesiastical history, including Jewish antiquities, and of church order.

7. The Professors in either of the above branches may, in their instructions, omit the particular consideration of such subjects in their respective departments, as may be pointed out by the Corporation, said subjects being sufficiently discussed by other Professors and Instructers in the University.

8. The Professor in the fourth department shall be denominated the Dexter Professor of Sacred Literature.

9. The Dexter Professor, and the Professors of Pastoral Theology, and of Ecclesiastical History shall perform such duties in the theological instruction of the University, as may from time to time be assigned by the Corporation, always including, with respect to the Dexter Professor, those specified by the Corporation of the College and the Trustees of the Society for promoting Theological Education at the University, who are in part the founders of this Professorship.

10. The Professors to be appointed shall have the privileges and powers pertaining to the Professors of the College generally, as well as make the usual promises and engagements.

11. Graduates of any public College or University are permitted to reside at the University as students of divinity, having the assent of the Faculty of Theology, and conforming to the laws and regulations made for the government of such students and of resident graduates generally.

12. Applications are to be made in person or by letter to one of the members of the Faculty, and when distance or

other circumstances require, must be accompanied by testimonials of good abilities, literary progress, and an unblemished character.

13. All students in divinity are to be matriculated by signing with the President an engagement to conform to all the laws of the University made for their government.

14. All theological students residing at the University, who have not completed the usual course of theological studies, shall belong to the seminary, and attend the public and private instruction of the same; provided the Faculty may, in special cases, dispense with portions of this attendance. No one will receive the pecuniary aid of the Institution or have the usual testimonial, unless he has been regular in attending the course of exercises and studies prescribed, as well as exemplary in every part of his conduct.

15. The Faculty will, at the beginning of each college year, and in the course of the year, when there may be occasion, make a report to the Corporation on the distribution and application of the Hopkins foundations, the funds of the society for promoting theological education, and other sums appropriated to the benefit of students in divinity; and the orders for the sums allowed will be given half yearly by the President, he receiving previously to the issuing of any order, a certificate from the instructer or instructers, on whom each student shall attend, that he has diligently pursued the course of studies and exercises appointed.

16. There shall be an annual examination of the Seminary by a Board of Visiters to be appointed for that purpose.

JOHN T. KIRKLAND, *President.*

*Aug.* 1819.

## INAUGURAL DISCOURSE.

THE liberality of our [illegible], especially of one distinguished [illegible]idual, who bore a name which has [illegible]nored, and which I hope will [illegible]e to be honored among us, ha[illegible]ew facilities for theological instruction in this University, an additional professorship has in consequence been founded. About to enter on the duties of this new office, I have thought, that it would not be uninteresting or useless to speak of the extent and relations of the science of theology, or in other words, of the intellectual acquisitions and endowments required to constitute a consummate theologian. I can, it is true, do little more than lead you to an eminence, and point out hastily the grand features of the prospect which lies before us; but even this rapid view may not be altogether unprofitable.

In such a survey as I have proposed, it is in its relations to metaphysics, that theology may be first considered. It treats of God, and of man considered as an immortal being. Upon these subjects revelation has taught us truths the most important; and some of the noblest and most powerful efforts of human reason have been employed in deducing the same truths from the moral and physical phenomena by which we are surrounded. It is one part of the business of a theologian to make himself familiar with those reasonings, by which the mind, now that it has been educated by christianty, is able, even when left to its own powers and resources, to establish or render probable the truths of religion. He must become the interpreter of the works and providence of God; and qualify himself to perceive the harmony between the two revelations which God has given us;—that, which is taught us by the laws which govern the world, as they proceed in their regular operation; and that, whose divine origin was attested by the presence of a power controlling and suspending those laws. He will find a perfect harmony between them; and will perceive that the

evidences of both, though derived from sources the most remote from each other, flow together at last, and bear us on to one common object, the truth of the essential principles of religion.

Yet notwithstanding the strength of argument by which these principles are supported, we cannot but remark that our conclusions are embarrassed by some difficulties; and we know that scepticism has labored to overthrow all our reasonings. The theologian, in pursuing his inquiries respecting these difficulties and objections, if he be determined to follow them to the uttermost, will be obliged to go on to the very limits of human knowledge; to the barriers which the mind has not yet passed, and which perhaps are impassable. He must fix a steady attention upon ideas very abstract, shadowy and inadequate. Where the last rays begin to be lost in utter darkness, he must distinguish in the doubtful twilight between deceptive appearances, and the forms of things really existing. He must subject to a strict scrutiny words and expressions which often deceive us, and often mock us with only a show of meaning. He must engage in complicated and diffi-

cult processes of reasoning, in which the terms of language, divested of all their usual associations, become little more than algebraic symbols; and in pursuing these processes, he must proceed with the greatest attention and accuracy, because a single false step may render his conclusions altogether erroneous.

The inquiries to which we are led by the objections of the sceptic, are curious, and in some respects important. But they are not those in which a man of sound mind will habitually delight. He will pass from them to studies more satisfactory, and which have a more direct influence upon the conduct and happiness of men, with feelings similar to those of the voyager, who having visited the barren though wonderful regions of polar solitude, where the sun dazzles without warming, is returning to a mild, inhabited, and cultivated climate. In respect to the metaphysical objections to our faith, it is to be remembered that the triumph over religion cannot be an early, but must be the last and most difficult achievement of scepticism. The temple in which we worship is placed within the citadel of human reason; and before it can be ap-

proached for the purpose of destruction, almost all our knowledge must have been surrendered. He who doubts the existence of God, has left himself no truth dependant on moral evidence, which he can reasonably believe.

In natural religion, we learn the character of God by a wide induction from the laws of his moral government, and from the objects and phenomena of the physical world. Here then is another field of study opened to the theologian. We are surrounded by an unknown and immeasurable power, which is every moment producing motion and life, and manifesting itself by effects the most astonishing and admirable. We must study the character of this power in its works. In order to do this, we must borrow aid from that science which has *wheeled in triumph through the signs of heaven.* We must enter the lecture room of the anatomist, and learn how *fearfully and wonderfully we are made.* And we must follow the student of nature to the fields, and woods, and waters, and inquire of the objects to which he directs us, what they can teach of their Maker. These studies are important, not merely as furnish-





ing materials for argument, but because they awaken, and render vivid, our feelings of devotion. In contemplating the perfections of God without reference to his works, they present themselves to us as metaphysical abstractions, which in their obscurity and vastness almost mock our comprehension. But when we turn to his works, we perceive his power, wisdom, and goodness embodied, as it were, and rendered visible.

But our religious faith rests for its main support on what we believe the declarations of God, communicated by Jesus Christ. What then is the evidence that Jesus Christ was indeed the messenger of God? This inquiry is connected with the whole history of God's miraculous dispensations, and will lead the theologian to the study of all the evidence relating to these subjects. Upon entering on this study, when he inquires what it is which is to be proved, he will find that a mass of statements and propositions of very different importance, have been blended together; and his first object must be, to distinguish and separate those, the truth of which it is indeed essential to maintain. He will then have for his purpose, to make himself

acquainted with the whole evidence, by which these essential truths are to be defended, to view the subject in all its relations, and to be aware of every objection and difficulty. His faith must not be the offspring of prejudice and ignorance, confident only because it has not examined, and ready to think an insult a good answer to an objection; nor a timid and doubtful belief, always liable to be startled by some unexpected disclosure, the result of that state of mind, in which one has proceeded in his inquires only so far, as to perceive that much remains to be settled. The proof of the miraculous dispensations of God consists in a series of the most remarkable phenomena, which, if we reject the belief of such interpositions, can be accounted for by no other causes; and which have marked the whole history of man with a track of light, like that of the setting sun upon the ocean. It is confirmed, I will venture to add, by the antecedent probability of such communications from God to man. In making himself acquainted with the evidences of our religion, as they have been commonly stated, the theological student will perceive, that it is only a portion of its proof which

has yet been collected and arranged ; and that in the most able works which we have on the subject, that of Paley for instance, is to be found only an abridgment, or a passing notice of many important arguments, while others are wholly omitted. Even in order to feel the full force of those arguments to which his attention may be directly called, he must apply the results of his own inquiries to the statements which may be laid before him. We speak for instance of that evidence for our religion, which arises from the intrinsic divinity of its character. But in order to estimate this evidence justly, we must compare our religion with the systems of philosophy and morals by which it was preceded. It was indeed a most marvellous event, and wholly out of the sphere of natural causes, that one who had never entered the schools of human wisdom, who had lived all his life in the midst of the gross ignorance the inveterate prejudices, and the habitual and degrading vices of Galilean Jews, surrounded by a people not more cultivated nor intellectual than those who now occupy the same land, that such a one should make known to mankind a universal religion, t

most pure, the most holy, and the most powerful in its operation. But in order to feel in all its force how marvellous a thing this was, we must know how much, or rather how little, had been previously effected by the efforts of the wisest and most enlightened of men. We must study their works, and we must make ourselves acquainted with the moral and religious state of mankind, which preceded and was contemporary with the introduction of Christianity.—In considering the external evidences of our religion, the theologian, if he be determined to view the subject in all its relations, will find himself conducted into the most difficult parts of ecclesiastical history, placed upon *debateable ground*, where there are guides enough to be sure, but few whom he can safely trust; where he must compare the reports of one with those of another, and examine for himself, and rely upon his own judgment. And though the result will be, I trust, the full confirmation of his faith, yet the opinions with which he concludes, may not be altogether the same as those with which he commenced his inquiries. When he comes to the study of the scriptures, in proportion as he removes

all the accumulated rubbish of technical theology, under which their meaning has been buried, and obtains a distinct view of it, he will discern new and very striking evidence of the truth of our religion. It is evidence, but a small portion of which has yet been distinctly stated by any writer. We have indeed scarcely any work relating to it, except that very valuable one of Paley, his Horæ Paulinæ. It is evidence which arises from the agreement of the New Testament with itself, the coincidence and correspondence of its different parts, and its agreement with all our knowledge respecting that state of things, which existed during the time of the first preaching of Christianity. The New Testament consists of different writings, comprizing accounts of our Saviour's ministry, some account of the ministry of his apostles, particularly of that of St Paul, many discourses of the former, and various letters written by the latter. The whole history which we here find is consistent with itself; and the discourses and letters are consistent with the history, and eve cannot be understood without a careful stud of the latter; nor for the most part witho

forming a distinct conception of the particular occasion of their delivery or composition. These discourses and writings reflect, as it were, the ever varying circumstances, which marked that most extraordinary state of things, produced by the ministry of our Saviour and his apostles. They have a relation throughout to the strong prejudices, the unfounded and extravagant expectations, the narrow conceptions, the limited knowledge, and the violent and vacillating passions of those to whom they were addressed. Nor is this coincidence of which I speak confined to discourses and writings ; it appears also in what was done by our Saviour and his apostles. It is a correspondence of their words and actions to all that we know, or can reasonably infer, respecting the very peculiar circumstances in which they acted and taught; a correspondence, at the same time, to which it was clearly not the purpose of the writer to direct the attention of his readers. This correspondence appears throughout the New Testament, ramifying into numberless particulars, spreading every where, and binding every part together. As we pursue our inquiries, it assumes at last a character so re-

markable and decisive, as I may venture to say, puts out of question all supposition of fiction in the history, or forgery in the writings. No human artifice could approach toward giving such a perfect imitation of nature, with all its accidents, and all its minute and latent characteristics. And why has not this internal evidence of the truth of our religion been more regarded? I answer, because the scriptures have been for the most part so imperfectly understood; because their meaning has been seen blurred and distorted through the medium of gross theological errors. It is a subject which particularly claims the attention of the theological student.

The study of the Bible, and particularly of the New Testament, is, perhaps more than any other, the peculiar province of the theologian. In pursuing this study, he must acquaint himself with all that collection of facts and rules, by the application of which the original text of the sacred writings is recovered as far as possible. He must be master of the languages in which they are written; an acquaintance with which should be one of the first, and will continue to be one of the last

objects of his attention. He must be, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, a philologist. The meaning of scripture is controverted in every part, and he must therefore be acquainted with the art of interpreting language, an art, of the very existence of which, many of those who have decided most confidently respecting the sense of the sacred writings, appear to have been wholly ignorant; and the principles of which have never yet, I think, been fully explained. To this end he must study the nature and constitution of language, generally, and as it appears in different particular forms in which it has existed. This is a subject which will lead him at once to the most curious and important branches of metaphysical inquiry, and one which is connected with the whole history of the revolutions and development of the human mind, and of the changes and accidents of human opinions and sentiments. In tracing this history, he must learn to mark with a practiced eye, the varying composition, and changeable coloring of human ideas, which are continually forming new combinations of meaning, while the old disappear, to be expressed by the same unalter-

ed words, while the same language remains in use, or by words apparently correspondent in the languages which may succeed it. Words, as well as coins, change their value with the progress of society.—By studying the character of language, the philologist and theologian will discover its intrinsic ambiguity and imperfection. He will learn what has been but very imperfectly understood, that words taken alone are often inadequate to convey any one definite meaning; and that the meaning which the words themselves leave thus loose and unsettled, is to be fixed and defined by reference to extrinsic considerations. He will therefore perceive that a mere critical knowledge of the languages in which the scriptures are composed, (and the same is true of other writings, is but the first step towards their explanation In order to know in any particular instance what is the true meaning of words, it is often necessary to know under what circumstances and relations they were used in that particular instance. The theologian therefore will proceed to collect and arrange all that immense variety of facts and truths, in connexion with which the language of the scriptures must





be viewed, in order to perceive its bearing and relations; and some one or more of which is continually entering as a principal element into all those reasonings by which its sense is determined. With these facts and truths he will make himself familiar. Without previous knowledge of this sort, the words of the scriptures, or of any other ancient writings, will often convey as false ideas and impressions to the mind, as a historical picture might give to one wholly ignorant of the story which forms its subject.

I have said that the expositor of scripture must be a philologist in the most extensive sense of the word. But in order to this, he must have the feelings and imagination of a poet. Without these poetry cannot be understood. Its interpreter must have the power of sympathizing with him by whom it is composed. The images and emotions of the writer must excite corresponding images and emotions in his own mind. But the Old Testament is full of poetry; and in the New Testament, the oriental and popular style which prevails, often requires no less than poetry itself, an acquaintance with all the uses of language, and with all the forms

in which feeling, passion, and imagination express themselves, in order to distinguish and disengage the mere literal meaning from all those images and ideas, with which it is associated.

But another part of the business of a theologian is to trace the history of our religion, and its effects upon the condition of society. In other words, he must be familiar with ecclesiastical history. In this study, one of the most interesting objects of attention will be the origin and progress of those enormous errors, which have cast their shade over the christian world, and intercepted the influence of the gospel. He will discover that many of these errors belong to an earlier age than Christianity itself; and that their sources are to be found in the superstitions, and still more in the philosophy, which existed before our religion was preached to men. The converts to our faith did not yield up their minds to its reception with an entire renunciation of every former belief and prepossession. They did not divest themselves of all previous trains of thought and reasoning, and all previous imaginations and sentiments. The light which spread over the

world was mingled with the darkness which before prevailed ; and God did not, as in the beginning, divide the light from the darkness. Men received much which was true, but they also retained much which was false ; and truth and falsehood grew up together, and constituted the religion which was professed. The past and present errors of Christians are many of them to be traced to a heathen origin, and especially to the heathen philosophy. The theologian therefore, who, in studying the evidences of our religion, had before been led to consider the previous condition, opinions, and character of mankind, will find himself conducted anew to the same subject by a different route, and brought to view it under a different aspect. The study of ancient philosophy lies before him. He must make himself familiar with forms of error, and modes of exhibiting truth, very different from those to which he has been accustomed. He must become, as it were, an inquisitive traveller in a strange country, among men who use a new language ; and he will see around him much, of which he cannot at once comprehend the reason, the origin, or the relations. The philosophy of every age has

had a powerful influence upon the contemporary forms of religion professed among Christians. But it is of essential importance to be acquainted with that philosophy, which prevailed when Christianity was first taught; because this, as I have said, was the parent of many of those errors which still exist, and which now, made hoary by time, are regarded with a veneration to which they are wholly without title.

In the study of ecclesiastical history, in order to estimate justly the facts and characters which it brings before us, a profound and thorough knowledge of human nature is required. And this study may reciprocally teach us more of the human character than perhaps any other. It will show us the best and worst passions operated upon by the strongest motives. It will teach us to think at once more highly and more humbly of man, and discover to us all his strength, all his weakness, and all his inconsistency. It will show us the strange forms in which his virtues may appear, and the infamous disguises which his vices may assume. It will show us the most remarkable and apparently the most heterogeneous combinations

of moral and intellectual qualities. It will present to us, in every variety, those complex characters which it is so difficult to estimate; because they exhibit the worldly and selfish passions in alliance with religion, and it is hard to determine to what point the latter is debased, or how far the former may be modified by the connexion; to what degree self deception may exist, and how far it is to be admitted as an excuse; or how far the errors and vices of the age may be pleaded in apology for those of the individual. It will teach us, that even powerful minds may be paralyzed by the touch of superstition; that there is no depth of debasement to which the human understanding may not be reduced; and that there is nothing so unmeaning, so false, so shocking, or so self contradictory, that it may not be received for divine truth; as in some ages and countries, animals the most noxious and contemptible have been worshipped as deities.

But one of the most grateful studies of the theologian is to trace the real influence of the true principles of Christianity. He will delight to observe how much they have done to raise the character of man, and to improve

the condition of society. Going back into past ages, and becoming, as it were, a citizen of Athens or of Rome, making himself familiar with all that can be known of their manners, morals, religion, and political institutions, entering their schools to listen to the teaching of their philosophers, and their temples to observe their rites of worship, he will perceive how much the imagination has often disguised their moral depravity, their ignorance, and their miseries; and will return to offer up thanks to God in a Christian church, that he was born among Christians.

The proper office of religious belief is the formation of character. Our faith teaches us, that we shall be happy or miserable in the future life, as we have done good, or done evil in the present. But what is good? what is virtue? These are inquiries which the theologian has to answer. It may be said, perhaps, that as far as regards practice, they are easily settled. When the question is merely, whether some particular action be lawful or not, *this*, I allow, is easily settled, in the great majority of cases of common occurrence, by one who will not let his passions

triumph over his judgment. But, at the same time, it is not to be forgotten, that different nations, different sects of Christians, and different individuals have held opposite opinions upon many subjects of morals of no small practical importance. You think religious persecution, a profanation of the name of Christianity, and an outrage upon the first principles of natural justice. But a little more than a century ago, it was thought to be one of the first duties of a Christian community, and there was not a Christian community in the world by which this duty was neglected. I certainly do not mean to question the correctness of the decided opinion and strong feeling, which we all now have upon this subject; but if any one be in the habit of ascribing a very high value to the authority of the church, it may startle him to recollect, that he has the authority of all Christendom against him from the fifth century to the end of the seventeenth. The question respecting persecution we may now indeed regard as at rest. But there have been many other mistakes in the Christian world as gross, though not quite as mischievous. Every one acquainted with ecclesiastical his-

tory knows, that very erroneous opinions have prevailed respecting the nature of Christian perfection, or in other words, respecting the nature of moral virtue. They have prevailed, and they still exist in a greater or less degree at the present day. There are too, at the present day, questions of no small practical importance, relating to particular points of morals, which are agitated among us. Some Christians, entitled to much respect for their virtues, deny the right of defensive war. There are, to give another example, some who allow a license in interpreting promises, affirmations, and oaths, which appears to others in a high degree criminal; and who maintain, for instance, the lawfulness of professing to believe articles of faith which they do not believe. The nature and extent of the duties of active benevolence, of those duties which require something to be done, in contradistinction from those which require something to be avoided, are very imperfectly understood. Different men have different notions of right and wrong, and estimate very differently the requisitions of duty; and they adopt in consequence very different modes of conduct. As it respects the principles of morals,

there is still less agreement than with regard to the practice. There are moralists, who contend that some one particular motive, which they select from all others, is in every case necessary to constitute an action virtuous. There are others, who allow that there are many motives which all partake of the nature of virtue. Those too who admit but one, differ most widely from each other as to the nature of this one; some, for instance, resolving all virtue into perfect selfishness, and others into perfect benevolence. With different opinions respecting morals, men may practise in a considerable degree alike; but it would be idle to contend, that their opinions have no influence upon their practice, and none upon their character and happiness. From the inseparable connexion, which I have stated, between theology and morals, it is the business of the theologian, as well as the moral philospher, to study the principles of the latter science, and to trace out their true bearing upon the conduct of men. He knows but little of the subject, who does not know that these are inquiries, which will try and task the understanding to its utmost strength. Morality is not to be determined

by our first impressions; nor is it a matter of intuitive judgment. We cannot be sure that all which we have been taught concerning it is true. It has been too hastily said that it is a science which admits of no discoveries. Morality is now better understood than in former times, and it will, we may believe, be better understood by our posterity, than it is by us.

The ultimate objects of a theologian should be to improve his own character, and the moral condition of his fellow men. But in order to effect the latter purpose, it is necessary to understand the human character. The complicated machinery of the mind is easily deranged; and no small mischief has been often produced by the ill directed attempts of the ignorant and violent to regulate and put it in motion. You have undertaken to be a guide to the erring, and an instructer of the ignorant. You have undertaken to lead men in the path of virtue and holiness. Take care that you do not repel them from it, or lead them astray. It is not so simple a work as you may imagine. A sentence may undo the effect of a sermon. It is the office of a theologian to administer the medicine of the

mind ; and in order to do this, he should be acquainted with its general constitution, and the diseases to which it is liable. And how is this necessary knowledge of human nature to be acquired ? In the first place, by distinctly perceiving the truth, that it is a kind of knowledge which may and ought to be acquired ; that it does not come merely by chance or by intuition. Every one judges of the characters of those around him ; but how few judge correctly ? In no science is it so necessary, as in the science of human nature, for the learner to be first convinced of his ignorance. In order to remove this ignorance, we must study our own hearts. We must be in the habit of analyzing those complex aggregates of motives from which we usually act, and of giving to every individual motive its true name. We must observe how we ourselves are affected by the actions and words of others, how often the effect produced is different from that intended, and we must remark why it is so. We must study human life as it lies around us, presenting phenomena scarcely less various, and scarcely less difficult of explanation, than those of the material world. We must remark the in-

in which feeling, passion, and imagination express themselves, in order to distinguish and disengage the mere literal meaning from all those images and ideas, with which it is associated.

But another part of the business of a theologian is to trace the history of our religion, and its effects upon the condition of society. In other words, he must be familiar with ecclesiastical history. In this study, one of the most interesting objects of attention will be the origin and progress of those enormous errors, which have cast their shade over the christian world, and intercepted the influence of the gospel. He will discover that many of these errors belong to an earlier age than Christianity itself; and that their sources are to be found in the superstitions, and still more in the philosophy, which existed before our religion was preached to men. The converts to our faith did not yield up their minds to its reception with an entire renunciation of every former belief and prepossession. They did not divest themselves of all previous trains of thought and reasoning, and all previous imaginations and sentiments. The light which spread over the

world was mingled with the darkness which before prevailed ; and God did not, as in the beginning, divide the light from the darkness. Men received much which was true, but they also retained much which was false ; and truth and falsehood grew up together, and constituted the religion which was professed. The past and present errors of Christians are many of them to be traced to a heathen origin, and especially to the heathen philosophy. The theologian therefore, who, in studying the evidences of our religion, had before been led to consider the previous condition, opinions, and character of mankind, will find himself conducted anew to the same subject by a different route, and brought to view it under a different aspect. The study of ancient philosophy lies before him. He must make himself familiar with forms of error, and modes of exhibiting truth, very different from those to which he has been accustomed. He must become, as it were, an inquisitive traveller in a strange country, among men who use a new language ; and he will see around him much, of which he cannot at once comprehend the reason, the origin, or the relations. The philosophy of every age has

speaker. Knowledge of human nature is the foundation of eloquence, but it is not the only requisite to its attainment. To write or speak so as powerfully to affect others, one must study those arts by which the mind is disciplined to attain this object, arts not of arbitrary invention, as some have imagined, but founded deep in the essential principles of human nature. The clear perception of truth will not alone give us power to exhibit it distinctly. To feel strongly ourselves is not the only thing required to enable us to produce strong sympathy in others. But on these topics I forbear to dwell. He who would understand what force and what effort of mind are necessary to consummate eloquence, may study those works, in which the great Roman orator has at once celebrated and exemplified the art of which he was master.

It remains to consider what preparatory studies are required in the attainment of theological knowledge. A theologian must be familiar with the ancient languages. But this is not all. As it respects the modern languages, we must not confine ourselves to the sources of information which may be found in our own. There are many works of much

value to a theologian in the French and German. In Germany, for the last forty or fifty years, the science of theology has been more cultivated than in any other country; though certainly not altogether with the happiest results. Nobody, I trust, will imagine, that I admire the licentious, and, as it seems to me, the most extravagant and untenable speculations of some of the modern German theologians. In reading their works, I find what I cannot but regard as theories and arguments of impalpable inanity; I seem, like Æneas when entering the confines of the dead, to be passing through a region of monstrous shadows, and to be, like him, pursuing a journey,

> Quale per incertam Lunam, sub luce maligna,
> Est iter in sylvis.

Some of these theologians, who have attained a certain degree of celebrity out of their own country, are, I think, little entitled to any kind of respect. To others of them, I should be disposed to apply the character which Thirlby, in the celebrated dedication of his edition of Justin Martyr, gives of Isaac Vossius, a character which could not be more descriptive of any individual, than it is of a class of writers. "He had great learning, superior genius, and

judgment too, which, if not very great, was enough and more than enough for one, who, unless I am entirely deceived, cared but little about discovering the truth upon any subject. He made it his object to seek for and invent new, out of the way, and wonderful opinions in criticism, in philosophy, and in theology. Whether they were true or not, he left to be examined by those who might think themselves interested in the matter."* But this character is far from being applicable to the whole body of modern German theologians. There are many who are not entitled to the praise; and some who are not obnoxious to the censure. Some have executed laborious works of great value; and others have written with much sobriety and good sense, as well as learning and ingenuity. As it respects the mass of those works, with

* "Erant in eo homine multæ literæ, ingenium excellens, judicium etiam, si non maximum, at tantum quantum ei satis superque fuit, qui, nisi omnia me fallunt, quid in quavis re verum esset, leviter curavit perspicere. Satis habuit nova, devia, mirabilia, in critica, in philosophia, in theologia, quærere et excogitare: vera anne falsa essent, id vero aliis exquirendum reliquit, qui sua istuc interesse existimarent."

which we can become acquainted only through a knowledge of the German language, their value, without doubt, has been by some considerably overrated; nor would it be safe to recommend the indiscriminate study of them to one apt to estimate the truth of opinions by their novelty. But still the value of many of these works is such, as to render a knowledge of the language very desirable to the theological student, and necessary to a consummate theologian.

In enumerating the intellectual qualifications necessary, I have perhaps convinced you, that *it is impossible to be a theologian.* In the highest and most comprehensive sense of the word, I do not know but it may be so. I shall have done some service, if I have convinced you, that it is no easy thing to acquire those qualifications, which a theologian, in the more popular sense of the word, may be fairly expected to possess. More, a great deal more, is necessary than a familiar acquaintance with some system of technical divinity, and with the arguments by which this is usually defended. Much more is required than that knowledge which a man may collect from reading a few books in our





own language, and those perhaps the books of a particular sect. Much more than a familiarity with those metaphysical quibbles, which show how much morbid ingenuity may remain, while common sense is entirely prostrated; and which, at the same time, like words of magic, darken the whole creation of God to those by whom they are pronounced. Much more than to be able to quote a mass of texts indiscriminately from different books of the Bible, and to interpret them conformably to the use of words in that theological dialect, which we may have learnt in childhood. And much more is required than a facility in running through all those errors, which our church, or our party, may have faithfully preserved, since the time when the science, of which I speak, lay in a state of the lowest debasement. True theology has little to do with any of these acquirements. It is a science of vast extent and dignity, embracing all the knowledge which directly or remotely concerns man as an immortal being. We believe, indeed, and we regard it as the glory of the science, that its most important truths, and the main arguments by which these are defended, may be made intelligible

to all; that in its last results it coincides with the first judgments of unprejudiced reason; and that the man of plain good sense, who exercises his understanding, and thinks for himself, and the profound and intelligent scholar, will find that there are no essential points of difference in their opinions. We may all arrive at last upon common ground, where the highest and humblest may meet together. But if any one refuse to submit to the decisions of our natural reason, and the dictates of our natural feelings; if he come to us, teaching what he calls incomprehensible propositions, and truths above reason; if he maintain doctrines abhorrent to all our best sentiments respecting God and his moral government; and if he require us to believe the system which he has received; we have a right to require of him in return, what are his qualifications to discuss these subjects? How extensively has he examined, how profoundly has he thought upon their nature and relations? How thoroughly has he acquired all that preparatory knowledge, which is necessary in their investigation? What is the compass of his studies, and what the reach of his faculties, that he thinks his judgments of so much

value, and his censures of so much authority? Has he in fact gone through that long course of discipline, necessary to enable him to decide questions of science and criticism, as they arise in the study of theology? We shall find, in many cases, that our new teacher is just as well qualified for the work which he has undertaken, as one with or without a little elementary knowledge of mathematics, would be qualified to decide on the truth of the demonstrations of Newton or La Place. Is theology, the most profound and extensive of sciences, the only one in which ignorant presumption may be allowed to dogmatize? It has indeed done this, and it has done much more. It has oppressed and persecuted. Hence it is that the progress of truth has been so slow and embarrassed. The operation of vulgar prejudices and passions has restrained the intellect of the wisest, and checked the courage of the boldest; and the science has in consequence not yet attained that rank and estimation which belong to it. It has been degraded by the irruptions of ignorance and barbarism; its provinces have been seized upon, and the rightful possessors of the soil driven away.

I shall then have effected something, if I have given you any just views of the importance and dignity of this science. It is in truth the highest philosophy, including every thing most interesting in speculation and practice. In proportion as it is better understood, and taught, the minds of men will be more enlightened, and their moral principles and feelings elevated and improved. And it will be better understood and taught. The obstacles which have opposed its progress are continually giving way. The human understanding will not much longer submit to such reasoning on the subjects of theology, as on every other subject it has learned to treat with contempt. The prejudice, before which the world bowed but yesterday, will tomorrow find *none so poor to do it reverence.* Let us consider how much the cause of true religion, and virtue, and happiness, for they are all inseparably connected, has been advanced even during the two last centuries. Let us consider how much may be gained in the ages to come, if we are but faithful to our posterity, and they are but faithful to themselves. It is but two centuries since Grotius lived;

since the time when he was struggling against ignorance, and persecution, and *oppositions of science falsely so called*, to guide his contemporaries in the way to truth. His contemporaries, in return, attempted to confine and extinguish within the walls of a prison, that light which was to spread itself through the world. They drove him from his native land; and when the shades of death were about to close upon him, he might have looked round and seen not a single country free from the oppression of ecclesiastical tyranny; and only one in which any religion unmixed with the grossest error enjoyed even a doubtful toleration; only one where a few harassed individuals had found a temporary refuge, from which they were just about to be driven.—What deep and holy joy would have filled the mind of this great man, if a prophetic vision could have been accorded to him of what we now behold around us; if amid his labors, and disappointments, and sufferings, he could have been assured, that he had not labored nor suffered in vain; if he could have foreseen that in this country,—which was then just appearing within the

political horizon, but which even then had attracted his attention, and been one object of his extensive studies,—a vast empire was to be established, throughout which the principles of religious liberty should be fully recognized, and in which such a large portion of the community should understand so well the real character, and feel so powerfully the true influence of our religion. But there is a promise of fairer and happier days to the whole civilized world. The light of Christianity has been obscured, and men have been travelling in darkness. But the thick vapours which concealed earth and heaven are breaking away; and we begin to perceive the beautiful prospect which lies before us, and the glittering of spires and pinnacles in the distance.

In enumerating the intellectual acquisitions necessary to constitute a consummate theologian, I have felt some apprehension, like that which Cicero expresses, when about to speak of those requisite in an orator: "Vereor ne tardem studia multorum, qui desperatione debilitati, experiri nolint, quod se assequi posse diffidant." In respect to this,

however, I may say as he does: "Sed par est omnes omnia experiri, qui res magnas, et magno opere expetendas, concupiverunt. Quod si quem aut natura sua, aut illa præstantis ingenii vis forte deficiet, aut minus instructus erit magnarum artium disciplinis; teneat tamen eum cursum, quem poterit. Prima enim sequentem, honestum est in secundis, tertiisque consistere." All the knowledge which the theological student acquires will be valuable. Whatever faculties he cultivates may be turned to account. It would be a poor reason to neglect to do any thing, because there is so much which may be done to advantage.

It is to our clergy that we must look for a body of learned theologians. It is through them principally, that the benefits of this science are to be derived to the community. But in order that they may become qualified for their office, the means of education must be afforded them; and leisure must be afforded them to pursue their studies, when the work of education is finished. The standard of preaching is very high with us; and it certainly is not desirable that it should be lowered. But this being the case, the mere



finest genius perishing under the slow torture of unremitted mental exertion. Something has been done to prevent the recurrence of this awful calamity; and means might be easily devised—but it is not here the place to point them out—to lessen that pressure of duties which is still too great. It is with the clergy as with every other department of knowledge and literature; if we would have them flourish among us, we must show that we are able to estimate their value, and the worth of those services which are devoted to their cultivation. We must not be *slowly* wise, nor *tardy just*. In conferring public rewards, there is nothing more opposite to true wisdom, than a calculating spirit of parsimony. Our literary men have been pursuing their labors under peculiar disadvantages; and we must be ready to afford every facility and every encouragement to their exertions; we extend a steady patronage to our literary

weekly round of a clergyman's labors has been found in some situations too severe, and even destructive of health and life. We have witnessed the terrible spectacle of men of the finest genius perishing under the slow torture of unremitted mental exertion. Something has been done to prevent the recurrence of this awful calamity; and means might be easily devised—but it is not here the place to point them out—to lessen that pressure of duties which is still too great. It is with theology, as with every other department of knowledge and literature; if we would have them flourish among us, we must show that we are able to estimate their value, and the worth of those services which are devoted to their cultivation. We must not be *slowly wise*, nor *meanly just*. In conferring public rewards, there is nothing more opposite to true wisdom, than a calculating spirit of parsimony. Our literary men have been pursuing their labors under peculiar disadvantages; and we must be ready to afford every facility and every encouragement to their exertions; to extend a steady patronage to our literary institutions, to increase our public libraries,

and to enlarge all our means of knowledge. We must be generous, and considerate, and kind; ready to praise and approve where praise and approbation are merited; liberal in our rewards, and reasonable in our demands.

If we would not have our country, with all its immeasurable resources, become a sort of barbaric empire; if we would not have a half-civilized population spread over our soil, ignorant of all which adorns, and ennobles, and purifies the character of man; if we would not be overrun with every form of fanaticism and folly; if we desire that our intellectual and moral rank should keep pace with our unceasing enlargement as a nation; if we desire that just notions of religion, and correct principles of duty should manifest their influence, and convey their blessings through the community; if we love our native land, and rejoice in its honor, and should be humbled in its degradation; we must recollect that good and evil are before us, and that it is for us to choose which we will; but that the one is not to be avoided, nor the other secured, by accident. What we may become

will depend upon ourselves ; not upon what we may wish, but upon what we may do. The character of its intellectual men gives its character to a nation. That literature which is without morals and without Christian faith, like the literature of France during the age of Voltaire, is one of the worst evils to which God in his anger ever abandons a people. That literature which throughout regards men as his creatures and as immortal beings, is one of the greatest blessings which he ever confers. As for those who are engaged in the studies of which I have been speaking, they have motives enough, in whatever situation they may be, to call forth all their efforts. But in our country, where so much is at stake ; where the last experiment seems to be making, to determine what man may become, when placed in the most favorable circumstances ; where every thing is in a forming state, and so much depends upon the impressions now received, and the direction now given, the motives of which I speak, acquire an overwhelming force. What must be the responsibility of those who are engaged in studies, which have so direct an in-





fluence upon the character and condition of men! And what consciousness of desert can be more honorable or more animating than his, who feels that he is directing all his efforts, that he is devoting the whole energy of his mind, that he is pouring himself out like water, to swell the tide, which is to bear his country on to happiness and glory!



The publishers of this Discourse have still for sale, at their store in Cambridge, and also at No. 1 Cornhill, Boston, a few copies of Professor Farrar's Inaugural Address, delivered in the Chapel of the University at Cambridge, Nov. 5, 1817: second edition, fine paper.

They have also lately published a second edition of Rev. Dr. Ware's Sermons, delivered in Boston, April 18, 1819, at the ordination of Rev. Mr. Dickinson.

# THOUGHTS

ON

# TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

BY ANDREWS NORTON,
Dexter Professor of Sacred Literature in the University in Cambridge.

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# THOUGHTS

ON

# TRUE AND FALSE RELIGION.

CONSIDERED merely in relation to this world, there is no subject, on which it is more important for us to hold correct opinions, than the subject of religion. There are no questions of such interest to us, as those which it proposes to answer. There is no department of knowledge, in which ignorance and error so essentially affect the character and condition of individuals and of society. Determine the relative degrees of virtue and happiness, in different communities; and you will have determined the relative degrees, in which the influence of correct religious principle is felt; and, on the other hand false notions of religion, ignorance and superstition, will be found in nearly the same proportions as vice and misery.

There is abundant proof of the fact just stated. We find evidence of it in the condition of the most polished heathen nations, the Greeks and Romans. There is indeed a deceptive glare cast around them by the vivid splendors of art and genius; and we are liable to be deluded likewise by a vulgar, school-boy admiration of virtues, which never existed but in fancy; and of which scarce any other show of evidence is to be found, but in some high-sounding epithets, used by such writers as Livy

in compliment to their countrymen; and interpreted at the present day in conformity to our own notions of moral excellence, and not those of a heathen. But putting aside these causes of error, if we examine into the real condition of those ancient nations, we shall find melancholy and decisive evidence of the fact maintained. It will gather round us from every side. Their religion, erroneous, imbecile and corrupting as it was, will be found a true index of the virtue and happiness which existed; and the want of some higher principle of moral conduct, than it was capable of furnishing, will appear in the examples of profligacy, injustice and cruelty, which will rise in dark masses to our view; in the general want of personal security and peace; in the destitution of domestic comfort and those charities which make life dear to us, and in the loosely compacted machinery and irregular movements of every organized society.

We may look next to the dark ages; and compare the state of religion, though that religion was called Christianity, with the state of morals and safety and happiness. We may look for further evidence of the truth maintained to Spain and Italy; or to Turkey and Hindostan. We may consider the tremendous lesson which France has been giving to mankind; and we may then turn to England and our own country; and we shall every where perceive the same general correspondence between the notions which prevail concerning religion, whether true or false, and the condition, good or bad, of those by whom they are held.

But we need not recur to the observation of what has been, in order to prove, that the direct influence of religion, properly understood, is in the highest degree beneficial. We have only to consider what must be the operation of the truths which it makes known. For the happiness and consolation of man, it teaches him that he is the creature and care of infinite goodness. To support and animate him in all virtue, it is continually inculcating

the truth, that God has made him the arbiter of his own happiness or misery; and that virtue and happiness are the same. It makes him know and feel, that the more good he communicates, the more he enjoys; and that benevolence, and generosity, and self-devotion are his interest. It places distinctly before him the fact, that there are pleasures of two kinds; some, which of themselves, by their mere excess and repetition, exhaust the power of enjoyment, and make the soul 'embody and embrute,' leaving it at last without any sensibility but to pain; and others, which invigorate the faculties, which enlarge our capacities for happiness, whose enjoyment is but a step to higher enjoyment, and this to continue forever. The influence of such religion upon the intellectual is scarcely less than upon the moral part of man. By preserving the mind pure from vice, it preserves its faculties in free and healthy exercise. The truths which it teaches are in themselves the most important; and they have a bearing upon almost every other interesting speculation. The moral taste which it cultivates is intimately connected with the taste for every other sort of beauty; and the enlargement and elevation, produced by the habitual contemplation of the infinite, the invisible, and the remote, will manifest themselves in all the operations and purposes of the mind.

Nor are we to estimate the power of religion in a community merely by its direct influence. It affects those who think least of its value. It affects them through public sentiment, by raising the standard of morals, by rendering a certain decorum of manners necessary to any degree of estimation, by the direct action of sympathy with those around them, and by the continual operation of institutions, and modes of thinking and acting, in which the truths of religion are recognized.

But we must not expect a beneficial influence from every thing which is called religion. We must attend to something more than the name; for food and poison





have both been called by this name. Religion, considered in the abstract, is a system of truths, and operates upon the mind through faith in these truths. But because these truths are of a nature to yield the most blessed fruits, it does not follow, that a system of opinions, inconsistent with, or contradictory to them, will produce the same effects, because men have given the same name to both. If religion be of the highest value, because it affords us as clear notions of the Divinity, as we are capable of receiving; it does not follow that a system is of much value, which confounds our notions of God by unintelligible doctrines respecting his nature. If religion be adapted to produce the most excellent virtues, by holding forth the most powerful motives and sanctions, and requiring that these should be regarded in every moral action; we cannot therefore infer, that the same effect is to be expected from a religion, which grants dispensations, indulgences and pardons for money; or from a religion, which teaches men that the main thing is to perform certain rites and ceremonies, and to regard certain observances; or from a religion, which insists upon the reception of a system of doctrines, as the great and sure passport to eternal happiness; and still less from one, which brings virtue into contrast with some other requisition or characteristic; and makes light of the former; and regards it even as a subject of contempt and jealousy in comparison with the latter—denominating all human excellence by some such title, perhaps, as that of *the filthy rags of self-righteousness*. If it be the genuine operation of true religion to produce constant exertion after moral perfectness; because it teaches that good and evil are before us, and that it is for us to choose and attain which we will; we cannot conclude that this will be the operation of a religion, which insists as a fundamental truth upon the doctrine, that we have no moral power, that our condition will not at all depend upon any thing which we may do; but that our eternal happiness or misery has been determined by the pleasure of another being.

who has issued his irreversible decrees without reference to any qualities which he may see in us. True religion is an inestimable blessing, because it teaches that God is the everlasting Friend and Father of his creatures; a God of infinite goodness. But what shall we say of a religion, which teaches that he has formed men, so that they are by nature wholly inclined to all moral evil; that he has determined in consequence to inflict upon the greater part of our race the most terrible punishments; and that unless he has seen fit to place us among the small number of those whom he has chosen out of the common ruin, he will be our eternal enemy, and infinite tormentor; that having hated us from our birth, he will continue to exercise upon us forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred. Whatever may be the worth of true religion, it surely does not follow, that this system of blasphemy must be also of great value, and very beneficial in its effects. Yet he must be a very ignorant, or a very bold man, who will affirm, that the doctrines last stated have not been taught, and very extensively too, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

With us Christians, religion is identified with Christianity. We receive the truths which it teaches, not because we are able to establish them by the deductions of our reason, but because we believe them to have been taught by God; because we think that the uncertain deductions of reason have been confirmed by the highest possible authority. But what is Christianity? A very different thing, unquestionably, from what has been the professed religion of far the greater part of Christians. The proposition may appear startling at first sight; but consider the state of Christendom from the fourth century to the sixteenth; and ask yourself, how great was the resemblance between the system of doctrines which prevailed during this period, and the system of truths which was taught by Jesus Christ? Was Christianity the religion of that Church, which, to use the bold language of the Apocalypse, *made itself*





*drunk with the blood of the Saints?* When you are satisfied with regard to its faith, you may then examine the scheme of doctrines developed in the Institutes of Calvin; or rather the same scheme, as it appears perfected in the works of the Westminster Assembly. If any one wholly unacquainted with our religion were told, that this was Christianity; and that the system taught in these books, was to be found in another collection of books, called the New Testament, I believe his surprise would be uncontrollable and unimaginable, when he came to read the New Testament itself, and to understand what is actually taught there.

If what we regard as Christianity, then, be true and valuable, what are we to think of such systems as those just mentioned? Why do we value Christianity? Because it gives us assurance of certain truths, which we believe to be of infinite importance. These truths constitute our religion. The character which we attach to them is not to be transferred to any thing different, and still less to any thing contradictory. So far as religion is concerned, these truths, and these alone, have operated to improve the condition of men. Whatever is opposed to them, whether it be taught under the name of Christianity or not, is opposed to Christianity. Just in proportion as we regard the latter as valuable, shall we regard the former as pernicious. Just in proportion as we are desirous of promoting the influence of true religion, shall we be desirous of removing all those false doctrines, by which its influence is counteracted and destroyed; and counteracted and destroyed the more effectually, because they have assumed its name and authority.

There cannot be different systems of equal value. There are not two opposite kinds of truth in religion. Nothing can be more irrational, than a strong attachment to any particular mode of faith, or form of worship, accompanied with indifference about its correctness, and indisposition to inquire into its real character. Nothing

can be more loose or inconsistent than his opinions, who thinks religion a great good, but does not think it worth while to examine and determine what particular doctrines religion teaches. If certain truths are of infinite importance, the errors opposed to them are in the highest degree pernicious; and he who maintains the latter, as if they were of the same nature with the former, is committing a very serious mistake indeed.

It is true, that the worst errors respecting Christianity do not always produce their natural effects. Perhaps they never have produced their full and complete effects. The essential truths of our religion appear so prominently and so distinctly in the revelation which God has given us, they are so conformable to our reason, and so agreeable to our natural sentiments, that they have never been entirely obscured and forgotten among Christians. Their operation, therefore, has been counteracted and diminished, but not entirely prevented. Opposite truths and errors have existed in the same mind, and mutually controlled each other's influence. Nay, in many minds, these errors seem to have existed merely in the form of speculation; and to have been met and overborne, whenever they tended to any practical result, by natural good sense, correct moral principles, and sincere piety. The practical religion of men is often a very different thing from their professed religion; or from that contained in the creeds of the sect to which they consider themselves as belonging. Nor may we ever expect to see the whole operation and perfect results of any false opinions, when those by whom they are maintained, live intermixed with others holding opposite doctrines, whose numbers and character are such as to command respect. It is the tendency of the opposite opinions of various men to act upon and modify each other. A man without any religion will be a very different person, if he live in the midst of a religious community, from what he would have been in a society of men equally destitute of religious principle with himself;

and the case is similar with him whose religion is erroneous. The characters of men are, without doubt, affected by many other causes beside the errors of the religious creed which they may profess.

We believe, and we rejoice to believe, that there have been men of excellent virtue in every different faith. But we must recollect, that in estimating the virtue, or rather the merit of individuals, we are continually making allowance for their difference of faith; for the different degrees in which they have attained a knowledge of true religion, and of the character of its requirements. We do not expect certain virtues from men under the influence of certain errors. In giving the tribute of our admiration to the moral excellence of Socrates or of Cicero, we have to remember, that Socrates and Cicero were heathens. In going back a century or two, if we should look without horror upon some who have passed even for saints, we must recollect, that they believed religious persecution to be a duty. We are continually applying the same principle, often perhaps unconsciously, in judging of the characters of those whom we regard as holding great errors; and frequently where such errors are entertained, though we may find much to praise, we find also, if not much to censure, at least much to regret.

True, there have been excellent men whose belief on the most important subjects has been very erroneous. But if any one should infer from this fact, that every different faith is equally adapted to produce such men, and that there is no ground therefore in their practical effects for preferring one to another, he would reason in the same manner, as if, having observed that some men do retain their health and live long in insalubrious situations and unhealthy employments, he should conclude that one climate or mode of life is as favourable to health as another. The constitution of man, and the testimony of experience would be no more overlooked in the latter inference than in the former. When it can be shown that men's opinions do not

influence their conduct, that there is an entire, divorce between their intellect and their principles of action; that men do not perform certain things, because they believe it to be their interest or duty to perform them; and that religion, which has been regarded as so active a principle in the production of both good and evil, is really nothing more than an inert subject of speculation; then it may be inferred, not indeed that it is wholly unimportant whether our religion be true or false, but that it is of little more importance, than whether we believe the system of Newton or Ptolemy respecting the material universe.

To false religion we are indebted for persecutors, zealots and bigots; and perhaps human depravity has assumed no forms, at once more odious and despicable, than those in which it has appeared in such men. I will say nothing of persecution; it has passed away, I trust, forever; and torture will be no more inflicted, and murder no more committed, under pretence of extending the spirit and influence of Christianity. But the temper which produced it still remains; its parent bigotry is still in existence; and what is there more adapted to excite thorough disgust, than the disposition, the feelings, the motives, the kind of intellect and degree of knowledge, discovered by some of those, who are pretending to be the sole defenders and patrons of religious truth in this unhappy world, and the true and exclusive heirs of all the mercy of God? It is a particular misfortune, that where gross errors in religion prevail, the vices of which I speak have shewn themselves especially in the clergy; and that we find them ignorant, narrow-minded, presumptuous, and, as far as they have it in their power, oppressive and injurious. The disgust which this character, in those who appear as ministers of religion, naturally produces, is often transferred to Christianity itself. It ought to be associated only with that form of religion by which those vices are occasioned. But such mistakes are continually made; because men do not discriminate between the different systems of faith,





which have passed under the name of Christianity; no
recognize the very different effects which they are adapte
to produce.

It is indeed questionable, whether the direct influenc
of the errors which have been connected with Christiani
ty, upon those by whom they are held, is equally mischie
vous with their indirect consequences. They are, it can
not be doubted, among the most operative causes of un
belief; and of what probably is much more commo
among us, and what we have so much reason to lament
indifference and scepticism in respect to religion. A systen
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and perplexity, an irksome topic of contemplation, on
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have at last brought themselves to assent to that form o
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present day but little deference. He would be regarded only with wonder or ridicule, who should think it worth while to quote Athanasius, or Augustine, or Calvin, or Turretin, as an authority upon any topic, except the peculiar theological doctrines which they maintained. The mysteries of the later Platonists, with the exception of the mystery of the Trinity, are at the present day treated with not much respect; and though the schoolmen have been our masters, we think it little worth while to study their writings, and forget to whom we have been indebted. Thus it is, that religious doctrines, which had their birth in ages of ignorance of false principles, and false reasoning, still remain in full vigour, though all the rest of the brotherhood of faiths of which they made a part, has long since perished. They remain disconnected from all the modes of conception and habits of mind, among which they had their origin. They remain standing insulated and unsupported, except by their connexion with each other. They are at variance with all the knowledge, and all the opinions and sentiments of our age upon every related subject. If we should take up any one of the standard authors upon these subjects, any one of those, whose reputation is highest, as a writer on natural religion, on morals, on the science of the human mind, or as skilful in the development of the human character, and in the midst of our reading, should chance to recollect some of the doctrines of technical theology, such as might easily be pointed out, we should at once perceive how strangely they come athwart the whole current of our thoughts, and how irreconcileable they are with all that is best established in human knowledge. We are transferred from the region of all certain or probable truth, from all those topics of contemplation among which the mind loves to dwell, into quite a new field of speculation, very barren, and desert, and hideous, and lying, if I may so speak, out of the limits of the habitable world. Let any one, while reading the fine arguments, and beautiful illustrations

of Paley respecting the goodness of God, bring to mind that doctrine which teaches, that this is a ruined world, that the far greater proportion of men are doomed from their birth to inevitable woe, that there is 'a curse of God upon the creatures for our sake;' and that with the exception of a privileged few, who do not contribute much to brighten the prospect, we see nothing about us but sin and its punishments; in the shock which this horrible doctrine will give to all the affections and feelings that fill his mind, he may perceive one proof, among many, of the direct contrariety of which I speak, between what reason and revelation teach, and what has been taught by false theology; between the traditionary doctrines of the latter, and the best conclusions of enlightened philosophy.

But we find that there are many claiming to be exclusively Christians, who are continually insisting that doctrines, such as those to which I have alluded, constitute the essential truths and characteristic features of our religion; and who raise a passionate outcry against all who endeavour to vindicate Christianity from the imputation. The creeds of every established church in Christendom teach such doctrines. The whole body of the clergy in every such church may be divided into three classes—those who heartily believe the doctrines of their creed; the smaller number, I suspect, by far;—those who by repeated efforts, and by carefully limiting their inquiries, have succeeded in silencing their own doubts, and in persuading themselves, that these doctrines admit of a plausible defence—and in the last place, a very considerable number indeed, and perhaps the most injurious to the interests of religion; those who give their solemn assent to the truth of doctrines which they do not believe. And what is the consequence of all this? Let us suppose an acute and intelligent man, occupied either in the affairs of the world, in professional studies, or literary pursuits, and whose habits of life have in consequence been such, as to leave him little leisure to make himself acquainted with the science of the-

clergy. Let us suppose that from the circumstances of his situation, some one of those systems of error which have assumed the name of Christianity, should have been continually presented to him as Christianity itself. How is he to determine that this pretension is not founded in truth? How is he to know that what is publicly announced as the religion of Christ, and what those around him, who profess to be best acquainted with the subject, zealously affirm to be the religion of Christ, does not, in fact deserve the name? By such a one as we have supposed, however, the popular system would for the most part hardly be thought to deserve serious attention, especially if he should find that it was in fact disbelieved by a considerable portion of those whose business it is to teach it. If he should happen to take up some one of those books which contain an exposition and defence of any of the principal forms of error which our religion has been made to assume, it is easy to imagine with what contempt and weariness, with what wonder and disgust, he would turn over the pages. It is not difficult to conceive how surprisingly trifling and inane, many of those statements, which we theologians are accustomed by courtesy to call arguments, would appear to one familiar with common modes of discussion, and with what may be called the practical reasoning of men. You may have a distinct conception of the state of mind to which I allude, if you will imagine one of the more acute writers in the Edinburgh Review sitting down to the perusal of Jones' Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, or Magee's book on the Atonement, or any other of a thousand works of a similar character.

Religion is not respected, because it is not understood; because a low, earth-born rival has assumed the name and place of that principle whose origin is from heaven. Can we think it wonderful, that there should be hundreds and thousands in every christian country, who come to feel little respect for a subject, which has never been fairly presented to their minds, which has always been connected

with associations that are offensive or degrading, and about which those have often written and talked the most, who have said nothing but what tended to misrepresent it and expose it to contempt? We see every where the manifest effects of the state of things to which I have adverted. It is not necessary to consider the condition of Catholic countries, where the monstrous corruptions which have been connected with Christianity, have left it scarcely any disciples, except among the lower and more ignorant classes of society. We may see enough of the disastrous consequences of error in Protestant countries, in our own neighbourhood, among those whom we meet in the common intercourse of life. From the causes which have been mentioned, we may account in a great measure for the melancholy phenomenon, that of the most eminent literary men of Scotland for the last sixty or seventy years, so many have been open enemies or very doubtful friends of Christianity. Turn over the pages of the most popular and able literary journal of our times, which exercises so much influence upon the minds of thousands of readers, and than which few other publications will tend more to mark and distinguish the present age ;—you cannot but be struck, I do not say with the infidelity which has occasionally appeared in a few articles, but with a characteristic far more deserving of notice, and suggesting thoughts more serious—it is the general exclusion of every religious topic ; and of nearly all direct reference to Christianity. You would produce scarcely a perceptible change in the character of the work, by striking out every thing which implies that such a religion as Christianity exists in the world. Whatever relates to the highest interests and noblest speculations of man, is excluded ; as if these subjects lay out of the sphere of all true and useful knowledge ; nay, as if there would be something of impertinence and folly in introducing topics borrowed from religion, into writings really intended to influence the sentiments, opinions, and conduct of the more intelligent classes of society. Whether

will believe the truths of religion or not, he must have an intellect singularly constituted, if he affect to despise them. But the doctrines of false theology have long outlived the time when they could command any respect, except from those whose minds have been disciplined to their reception; and if we will insist on mistaking the latter for the former, it is not strange that such effects should be produced as we see existing.

But the subject presents itself under a still more gloomy aspect. What must be the effect of any of those systems of faith which have assumed the name of orthodoxy, when urged upon the reception of the young? What must be the effect, when such a system with its hideous features, and squalid with all the barbarism of a rude and ignorant age, is obtruded upon a mind of warm affections, of unperverted and undisciplined feelings, of quick sensibility, and impatient, hasty and petulant in its judgments? Take such a young man, and persuade him, if you can, to read through the standards of doctrine which your church has sanctioned; no matter whether that church be episcopal or presbyterian, and no matter whether your standard be the Westminster Catechisms and Confession, or the Thirty-nine Articles. Tell him that this is your religion, and must be his. Lay before him your aggregate of unintelligible doctrines concerning God, and of doctrines which are but too intelligible concerning the condition and prospects of man; and tell him that the creed which you put into his hands, contains a full exposition of all that is consolatory and delightful and lovely and glorious in religion. If you can bring him to contemplate and understand what you have laid before him, have you any doubt with what loathing and horror he will regard your religion? It is true indeed, that precisely such a case as I have supposed, is not likely to occur. False notions of religion are, for the most part, communicated at an age when they are but imperfectly understood, and but little attended to; and before the understanding has learnt to trust its own decisions.

They gradually open upon the minds of the young. Their effect, therefore, though similar to what has been described, is not commonly so immediate and striking. It is true also, that as the mind, through the merciful provision of nature, can accommodate itself to almost any circumstances, so it may in time be broken down to tolerate almost any belief. As life advances, various causes may reconcile men to a system of faith, which, according to their different tempers, they had at first regarded with neglect and derision, or with doubt and aversion. But, in the mean time, the character has been formed without religion. The sensual passions have been indulged, vicious habits, and low and selfish feelings have been contracted, the mind has been debased; and the change produced by adopting an erroneous system of faith, is often but little more than superficial and exterior.

The different systems of religious error which have prevailed among Christians, have usually been employed as very efficacious instruments, in effecting the worldly and criminal purposes of those by whom they have been most zealously supported. They have been made to pander to the ambition and vices of unholy men, pretending to be ministers of God and Christ. They have been brought into intimate union with corrupt civil institutions; and when guarded by the sword of the law, they have liberally repaid the support which they have received, by employing in their turn the terrors and artifices of superstition to humble the minds of men. True religion can be the minister of nothing but good. All its sanctions and motives are directed to this end. But false religion may be made an agent in the production of almost any sort of evil. It is of its very essence to misemploy and misdirect the sanctions which it holds forth. In proof of what has been said, it is not necessary to look back to the period, when a despotism the most odious and degrading was established over Europe under the name of the Church of Christ; and when the pretended authority of our religion was made a shelter for rank and rotten iniquity. It is better to regard the more

[illegible] of our own time, and to take examples, which if not quite so impressive, have a more practical bearing. In every country of Europe, there are without doubt many, who regard religion merely as a part of the political machinery of the state, and a powerful instrument for preserving and strengthening the existing distinctions of society; who, on the one side, view its establishments as a branch of the government patronage, and, on the other, as a station of rank and wealth. The style and temper in which the national religion is defended, often borrow their character from the kind of estimation in which it is held. There is a worldly, political, interested zeal shown in its defence, having an origin very different from the spirit of Christianity. It is a zeal for their own profit, and not for the happiness of their fellow creatures, which engages men in its support. Its corruptions are strenuously defended. All examination and all improvement are angrily repelled. The work of reformation must not be begun; for if it be suffered to begin, who can tell where it will stop? Who can tell how many profitable and convenient evils will be removed, or how many habits and customs and indulgences, which are now tolerated, might be marked out for reprobation? In the defenders therefore of the established faith, in such writers for instance as Horsley, we often find a tone of authority, the insolence of artificial rank, and that gross and impudent unfairness, on which few men will venture, unless they know that there is a strong party ready to cheer them as victors, whatever may be their real success. If its defenders do not write altogether in the style of those controversialists of former days, who knew that the executioner was at hand to give them aid; they nevertheless write like men, who feel that they have the power of the state on their side, and who are far more solicitous to maintain than to justify what is established. In such a state of things, true and useful learning ceases in a great measure to be cultivated by the clergy. Those of them who make their creed a matter of conscience, often find it safest not to examine too curiously the history

or the doctrines of the faith which they are required to profess. Their creed presents itself to them on every side as a check to all liberal inquiry in the studies peculiar to their station. Nor is much inquiry found necessary; for their church, with its established institutions, forms and doctrines, relies for support on a power, which affords it a very different sort of aid, from what the learning and talents of its ministers might furnish. But a deficiency of learning and talents is often far from being the worst characteristic of the clergy of such an establishment. When, as is commonly the case, its offices are considered principally as means of affording patronage, or of securing rank and emolument, men who possess very different qualifications from those necessary in their proper discharge, will be most successful in obtaining them. A large proportion of the professed ministers of religion will then be found not merely ignorant and inert, but destitute of religious principles and feelings, without belief, it may be, in any faith, worthless and profligate. In the character of a great part of the French clergy during the last century, when the highest offices of the church were filled by the nominations of the atheist Regent, Duke of Orleans, and of the brutal debauchee, Louis XV. we may perceive an example of what has been stated. In the contempt and utter discredit which such clergymen must have cast upon religion, the great principle that holds human passions in restraint, and unites man to man, we may perceive a cause which alone is almost sufficient to account for the awful disruption of society that followed. But long before the evils of a corrupt establishment have become so glaring, it is easy to perceive its effects upon the minds of the laity. Their respect for religion, when not merely assumed as a matter of policy, becomes in a great part ceremonial, exterior and worldly, the respect of those who mistake what is in fact nothing more than mere vulgar pride in the dignity of their church, for something corresponding to religious sentiment and principle. It is a respect for a particular form of faith and worship, produced







very much by its associations with antiquity, and solemn buildings, and imposing ceremonies, and high rank, and the power of the state. Nay, where ignorance and superstition gain complete establishment, as in Spain, all regard for religion may degenerate at last into mere bigotry to a name, accompanied with the mechanical and perfectly unmeaning observance of appointed ceremonies.

Among an ignorant and superstitious people, there may be a certain traditionary and exterior respect, and even zeal for their religion, while the ministers of that religion are regarded with dislike and contempt. "With all this attachment to forms and ceremonies," says an enlightened traveller, speaking of the religion of Spain, "it might naturally be expected that the clergy would be looked upon as objects of veneration; but so far as I can judge, this is by no means the case. The language held towards the ministers of religion is not always respectful, and is sometimes scurrilous."* This singular phenomenon exists, in a greater or less degree, in other parts of Europe. But it cannot exist long, where any considerable degree of intellectual improvement prevails. As soon as the mind ceases to be the mere slave of habits and prejudices, on which reason has never acted, one of its first rude operations will be to transfer those sentiments, with which it has regarded the ministers of religion, to religion itself, and to associate them with it. Respect for religion can hardly exist in an enlightened community, separate from respect for its ministers. In some parts of our own country, it is a truth not to be concealed, that the clergy have lost a portion of that estimation in which they have been, and in which it is most desirable that they should be held. Where this has taken place, the fact is to be ascribed, I believe, partly to the nature of the doctrines which they have maintained, so abhorrent, in many cases, to the reason and common feelings of men, and so discordant with the present state of knowledge and intellectual improvement; and partly, though I

*Jacob's Travels in the South of Spain, p. 93.

say it with extreme reluctance, to the traits of character, which a belief of these doctrines is adapted to produce. The fact itself, has been strikingly exemplified in a neighbouring state; and it is, I think, very apparent, that some of the principal, if not the sole causes of it were those which have been stated. So operative indeed have been those causes, that a demand for greater religious toleration was found a very effective means of advancing to power the party which now prevails. In some of our commonwealths, there has been manifested a disregard, amounting to enmity, of the comfort, the respectability, and even the rights of the clergy. The rulers of the day have done what was in their power, by their constitutions and laws, to desecrate and unchristianize the state. They seem to have unlearnt in some new empirical philosophy, the truth, which forty centuries have been teaching, that religious principle is the necessary support of government. If one were disposed to melancholy anticipations respecting our country, I do not know where he might look for a more alarming prognostic of evil, than to the disinclination which has been manifested to make suitable provision for the constant religious instruction of the people. But this error, originating, partly, at least, in temporary and accidental causes, such as have been stated, will, we may hope, be hereafter corrected. It has been justified only by a rash and extravagant application to practice of certain abstract, speculative principles, the nature of which has been very rudely apprehended, and their necessary limitations and conditions very imperfectly understood. Corrupt religious establishments have undoubtedly been connected with bad governments; but it does not follow from this, that every government must not rest for support upon religion well or ill understood. To every government, this support is in fact necessary; human society itself has no other basis; and every government ought therefore, if from no higher and holier motive, to make provision that religion shall be taught in the best manner possible. If the religious errors which have prevailed, have contributed directly or indirect-

ly, to prevent the accomplishment of this object, it may be reckoned as among their most melancholy consequences. But I proceed to consider the subject before me, in still a different view.

When the religion publicly taught is of such a character, that reason turns away from it, and refuses to acknowledge its authority, it can have but a weak hold on the minds of the more intelligent, and exercise but little influence upon their habitual affections and daily conduct. But there is a spurious sort of religion of the imagination and of temporary sentiment, which sometimes supplies the place of the religion of the understanding. Some of the infidel writers of Germany are willing to admire Christianity as a beautiful fable. There is such desolation and heartlessness in utter scepticism, that we are ready to turn from it even to a shadowy, unsubstantial image of the truth. The resemblance may indeed be preferred to the reality; for if it has far less of joy and hope, it is also far less solemn and awful and authoritative. Where real, living religion does not exercise its permanent, unremitting influence, we may often find in its stead a poetical, theatrical, mystical religion, which may furnish themes for the expression of fine sentiment, and the indulgence of transient emotion; which delights to talk about sacrifices, but forgets duties, and has nothing to do with the unnoticed patience of obscure suffering, the unpraised self-denials of humble goodness, the strong and silent feelings of habitual piety; or indeed with any virtues, but what are splendid and popular and fit for exhibition. It is such a religion which the authoress of Delphine has celebrated with her passionate and enthusiastic eloquence. It is this religion which the writer of the Philosophical Dictionary, not to mention any work more infamous, could introduce into his tragedies; and it is for such a religion that Moore and Byron may compose sacred songs. Nobody, I trust, will so far misunderstand me, as to suppose it my intention to deny, that the sentiments expressed by such writers are sometimes very beautiful and correct. I only mean, that there is a religion, not of the understanding,





and not of the heart, which terminates in the expre
of fine sentiments.

Such then, as I have described, and so great, are the
which result from false notions of religion. They ca
removed only by establishing the truth; and to this en
truth must be earnestly avowed and defended, with a d
felt conviction of its value to mankind. It is indeed a
pleasant thing to encounter prejudices, however miscl
ous, when among those who hold them, there are r
very estimable for their virtues, who consider our pr
sions as insincere, and our labors as profane; and
therefore regard us with much harsher feelings of dis
than common collisions of opinion are apt to prod
But allowing this to be as great an evil as you will, it
still be weighed against those evils which it is your pu
to remove; and it is but dust in the balance. There
way in which the truth can be made to prevail, excep
the direct avowal of it, by the forcible and full stateme
the arguments by which it is supported; and by a clos
counter with opposite errors. Except the truth be cl
stated and defended, it is not easy to see how it can be
to prevail on any disputed subject; but there is cert
no other way, in which you can hope to remove preju
so widely spread, and so obstinately maintained, as
respecting religion. Yet this encounter of truth
error, is religious controversy, of the ill consequenc
which we sometimes hear so much, both from those
are entitled to high respect, as well as from those wh
not. But it is a fact, though one not generally recogn
that in many cases, the manly, well tempered, steady a
of the truth, tends far more to repress, than to excite, th
ter and angry passions of our opponents. Look a
great change in the style of attack and controversy,
rected against Unitarian Christians, in our own cou
which has been produced during the past year or
almost by this cause alone. It has its effect upon all
est and fair minds; for the tones of deep earnestness
strong conviction, can hardly be mistaken or misrepre

ed. It has its effect upon minds of a different character; for where there is no great superiority of vantage-ground, reproach and insult are found in time to be but poor weapons against that sword, with which truth is furnished 'from the armoury of God.'

The real practical opinions of wise and virtuous men of different sects correspond, without doubt, much more nearly than their creeds. But as to the principal of these creeds, which determine, in a greater or less degree, the faith of the generality, it is idle to turn away our eyes, and endeavour to keep out of sight their direct opposition to each other, in regard to doctrines the most momentous. Between the extremes of truth and error, we may find also every grade of professed belief, in proportion as men have examined, more or less thoroughly, and with more or less honest freedom. But while these various, wide and most important differences exist in the professed faith of Christians, the minds of many will be confounded and lost in the search after truth, if those who are able do not step forward to assist and guide their inquiries. It is very desirable that men should give up their old errors; for these errors have been exceedingly pernicious; but there is danger lest he, whose faith has rested principally upon authority, and who has learnt to doubt and dismiss one doctrine after another, should begin to distrust the whole system of religion. There is danger that he will be unable to distinguish for himself between its essential truths, and those errors of human origin, which have been so blended with it; and that in rejecting the latter, he will at the same time lose his reverence for the former. In order to prevent this consequence, it is necessary for the defenders of real religion to separate, and to distinguish most clearly, those truths from these errors; to draw a broad and deep line of demarcation between them, and to render evident the essential opposition in their character and effects. It is necessary for them to make it felt, to place it out of dispute, that it is not any childish and petulant love

of innovation, nor any contemptible desire of attracting notice by assailing men's prejudices, but that it is their interest in true religion, their conviction of the value of Christianity, and their desire of promoting its influence, which are their motives in opposing doctrines, by which, as they think, its value has been obscured, and its influence obstructed. They must show what they maintain, and why they maintain it, what they oppose, and why they oppose it. They must explain themselves, prudently and wisely as they may, but very earnestly and explicitly.

There is, beyond doubt, great reason to rejoice in what has been already effected toward vindicating the true character of Christianity. But even in those communities, such as our own, where it is best understood, much, very much, remains to be done, before correct notions of religion can be fully developed, and exhibited in all their relations and bearings, and before our religion can be distinctly recognized, and received by men in all its purity, and divinity, and power. Old errors meet and embarrass us on every side. One false doctrine retreats upon another for support. There are many difficulties to be removed; many inquiries to be answered; and many honest doubts to be solved, which have their origin not in the nature of things, but in long established prejudices. The light is as yet mixed and cloudy. The truth itself, in many minds, rests upon a foundation not perfectly secure, and requiring to be strengthened. There are many ready to believe it, and who do believe it, but whose faith requires to be enlightened and confirmed. There are many, whose opinions, though prevailingly correct, are, in a considerable degree, undefined, hesitating and inconsistent. There are others in a state of painful uncertainty. Under these circumstances, there is a call for instruction and guidance, which those who are able to afford them, are not at liberty to decline answering. Our fellow christians are in need of such knowledge, as may enable them to attain distinct and full conceptions of religion, and to embrace it with

a satisfied mind and earnest faith. If it be in our power to dispense the bread of instruction and life, it will surely be our guilt, if we suffer them to complain, that they 'look up and are not fed.' But in communicating this knowledge, there is not a step we can advance, without encountering one prejudice or another. There is nothing we can teach, which will not be contradicted. There is nothing we can propose, which will not be cavilled at. There is no information we can communicate, which will not be disputed. Every plan, apparently the most unexceptionable, for advancing religious knowledge will meet with opposition; for as this knowledge advances, some favourite error must fall before it. Let us consider one example. For the last century, there have been reiterated and strong complaints of the imperfection, errors, and obscurity, of the common English version of the Bible. There is a series of authorities to this purpose, collected by Archbishop Newcome,* no mean authority himself. They are taken from writers of different communions and belief, some of them of the first eminence as critics, and theologians, and all of them more or less distinguished. To those whom he has quoted, many more of a similar character might easily be added: and it may be doubted, whether there is a name of any weight, to be placed in the opposite scale. In England, there has been a call from within the church, and from without, for what Bishop Lowth has spoken of as "that NECESSARY work, a new translation, or a revision of the present translation of the Holy Scriptures," by public authority. And how much has been effected in consequence? Every body knows what answer must be made—Nothing. The jealousy of all change has stood in the way of all improvement. Those who have felt that they, personally, might hazard something, and could gain nothing, by any alteration, seem to have cared little, whether religion might gain any thing or not. Even in our country, where it is un-

* In his work entitled "An Historical View of the English Biblical Translations: the expediency of revising, by authority, our present Translation: and the means of executing such a revision."

supported by public authority the version of King James' translators, erroneous as it is and in considerable portions of it, scarcely intelligible, has attained the same reputation and currency as in England. It is the only version in common use, the only one distributed by our Bible Societies, the only one read in our pulpits ; and till within a few years, no other version of any part of the Scriptures could have been readily procured in our country. It seems to be forgotten by many, that it is merely a faulty translation, and ~~to be regarded~~ with the same reverence, as if it were the very original of the holy writings. True zeal for the Scriptures would make us earnest indeed to furnish the best, the very best, means of understanding them correctly and fully. Nobody can well doubt, that this would be its natural operation. But there is a pretended zeal for the Scriptures, which has shown itself in a quite different manner ; and has opposed directly or indirectly every effort for the purpose. It is but one instance out of many, of the resistance, which all attempts to communicate religious knowledge have met with, and will meet with hereafter. Nothing can be effected without a struggle and a contest ; and he who has a philosophical or an epicurean dislike to controversy, who is fearful lest it should mar his temper, or put his dignity to hazard, or endanger his reputation, or disturb his quiet, may assure himself, that he is not such an instrument as is required in the work of enlightening and reforming his fellow men. The Sybarites might as well have been called in to assist in establishing the fortunes of the Eternal City.

But there are those, whom it is not to be wished should engage in the attempt to purify our religion. There are men, intemperate, imprudent, distinguished by their levity of judgment, ready to believe, that the further they remove from established opinions, the more they show themselves free from vulgar prejudices, fond of paradoxes, valuing opinions by their novelty and not by their correctness, taking pleasure in presenting even the truth in a form the most offensive to their opponents, unable to recognize the

they appear to regard it

different appearances which the same essential belief may assume, according to the various characters of different minds, understanding little, and valuing less, the judgment and toleration with which the soundest principles are sometimes to be avowed, and having for their principal object to gain a worthless sort of notoriety, on the ground of being original thinkers, when this notoriety can be gained without loss or hazard. They commonly agree with the defenders of true religion, if they agree at all, only in attacking certain errors, and not in maintaining the great truths of our faith. But the latter is the main object, ever to be kept in view; and those errors are to be controverted, because they are inconsistent with these truths. Such auxiliaries are more to be feared than any opponents. They resemble the predatory bands which sometimes accompany the march of an army, exciting ill-will and dread in a friendly country, and of no use in that of an enemy. Happily the defenders of the truth among us, have hitherto had little reason to complain of such assistance.

There is, it may be believed, a Reformation of religion now taking place of not less importance, than that to which the name has been so long appropriated. The purposes of God, in giving Christianity to men, have not yet been fully developed. Without doubt, its truths, notwithstanding the mass of errors with which they have been encumbered, have been continually operating to raise the character, and improve the condition of man. But, I trust, the providence of God, in conferring this great blessing upon our race, looked far forward, to ages much beyond our own. There are, I think, indications of a period, when the truths, and even the evidences of our religion, shall be much better understood than at present. But it is strange, it may be said, that a revelation from God, should have been so long mingled with so much human error. You think it strange then, that he did not, by one vast miracle, annihilate in a moment, all those errors respecting religion and duty, which thousands of years had been accumulating in the world; that he did not sweep away at

once all prejudices from the minds of men, so that his truth might find unresisted entrance, and hold undisputed authority; and that he did not afterward, by a perpetual act of his power, so strengthen their understandings, and so restrain their passions and follies, that no false opinions should, in any time to come, be ever introduced and maintained. Examine the history of opinions, and you will find that errors, either in religion or philosophy, which have once generally prevailed, are very slowly removed and superseded. Common modes of conception, and the popular belief, are transmitted from one generation to another, like the traditionary customs of the east. However unreasonable they may be, it is, for the most part, only by a very gradual process, that they are modified and corrected. The men of one generation are the instructers of the next. Coming ignorant into the world, we are compelled first to receive what ~~our predecessors~~ may teach us; to believe, under ~~the~~ direction ~~of others~~, before we can exercise our own judgment; and when our instructers have been in error, it takes us a long time to discover the fact, and there are few who are able to discover it at all. The world is slow and dull in unlearning its prejudices. False doctrines which sprang up long before the introduction of Christianity, subsequently became connected with it, shooting their branches among its truths, and twining close around them, so as almost to conceal them from view, with their rank and poisonous luxuriance. The same false doctrines still remain flourishing. In opposing the errors of Christians, we are in fact often opposing only the errors of heathen philosophy, a little disguised, and somewhat modified, by time and circumstances. That so much error should have been incorporated with Christianity, or rather, that Christians should have fallen into so many errors on the subject of religion, for that is the true mode of stating the fact, does not seem very difficult to be accounted for, when we consider how much there is in the intellectual, and still more in the moral imperfections of man, which may lead him to embrace readily, false

conceptions of his highest relations and duties; when we acquaint ourselves with the erroneous doctrines in philosophy, religion and morals, which prevailed throughout the civilized world, when our religion was introduced; and when we further have a correct notion of the fact just stated; how very slow and reluctant are the changes, which take place in the speculative opinions of large bodies of men, even under the operation of the most powerful causes. That men should retain their errors in opposition to the clearest discoveries of revelation, was not more wonderful eighteen centuries ago, than it is at the present day. It is not more wonderful, than that they should retain them in opposition to the clearest discoveries of reason.

The dark ages were the triumph and consummation of the errors and vices, which were in the world when Christianity was introduced. Our religion struggled against them and delayed their progress; and our religion at last delivered men from the slavery in which they were enthralled. It is to the spirit of Christianity, that the regeneration of Europe is to be ascribed. There were men, who if they had but imperfect notions of the real character of God's revelation, yet felt the power of some of its truths; and these were the men who made successful resistance to the evils by which the world was oppressed. Without that elevation and energy of mind which the belief of immortality inspires, without those motives which Christianity alone affords, without that strong feeling of right and wrong which christian morals alone produce, and without that spirit of self devotion which is the spirit of our religion, I know not how the deliverance of mankind from the reign of darkness could have been effected. I know not what better hope there would have been for Europe, than there is now for Turkey; or why it might not have continued to lie in the same state of degradation, moral and intellectual, in which almost all Asia has lain for at least two thousand years. Since its commencement, the work of improvement has been continual-

ly carried forward; and we now breathe a free air, and enjoy a blessed light, such as were never known before. But the work of improvement has been an arduous and severe struggle, a bitter conflict. The errors of men on the most important subjects have been in strict alliance with their pride, their passions, their interest and their vices; and they have altogether maintained their ground with determined perseverance. Our religious and moral improvement has been purchased by severe thought and laborious investigation, by high-minded sacrifices of worldly hopes, by a generous contempt of reproach and persecution, by tears and blood. Wise men have spent themselves in painful and thankless labors, and holy men have suffered and died, to procure for us the privileges which we enjoy. In tracing the melancholy history of our race, it is to such characters that we must turn for consolation. They give us pledges, on which we may rely, of the worth of man. They have followed in the track of pure splendor, in which their great master ascended to heaven. They have carried on the grand scheme of moral reformation which he began, against similar opposition to what he encountered. They have continued the work of glory and suffering, which he committed to his apostles. They have purchased ingratitude at the same price, which saints and philosophers had paid before. It is delightful to remember, that there have been men, who, in the cause of truth and virtue, have made no compromises for their own advantage or safety; who have recognized 'the hardest duty as the highest;' who, conscious of the possession of great talents, have relinquished all the praise that was within their grasp, all the applause, which they might have so liberally received, if they had not thrown themselves in opposition to the errors and vices of their fellow men, and have been content to take obloquy and insult instead; who have approached to lay on the altar of God 'their last infirmity.' They, without doubt, have felt that deep conviction of having acted right, which supported the martyred philosopher of Athens, when he asked, "What disgrace is it to me,



if others are unable to judge of me, or to treat me as they ought ?"* There is something very solemn and sublime in the feeling, produced by considering, how differently these men have been estimated by their contemporaries, from the manner in which they are regarded by God. We perceive the appeal which lies from the ignorance, the folly, and the iniquity of man, to the throne of Eternal Justice. A storm of calumny and reviling has too often pursued them through life, and continued, when they could no longer feel it, to beat upon their graves. But it is no matter. They had gone where all who have suffered, and all who have triumphed, in the same noble cause, receive their reward ; but where the wreath of the martyr is more glorious than that of the conqueror.†

There is no sufficient support for good morals ; there is no security for the common blessings of civilized life ; there is no power adequate to raise the condition of man, and to remove the vices and miseries which press so heavily upon human society, except correct religious principle. By comparing our own condition with the condition of those who have preceded us, we may perceive that it has already effected not a little. But more than we can calculate remains to be done ; and there is much, which, through the blessing of God, we may hope will hereafter be accomplished. We seem indeed to be gathering but the first unripe fruits, and enjoying but a little foretaste of the rich abundance which is promised. There have

* —εμοι δ τι αισχρον το ινηρους μη δυνασθαι τιμαι ωμων τα δικαια μητε γινωσκειν, μητε τιθεναι?

† Such examples Milton delighted to contemplate and follow ; and it was the contemplation of such human examples, which produced the inspiration of the following passage.

Servant of God, well done ; well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth : * * * * *
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence ; for this was all thy care,
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse.

been times of ignorance and infamous imposture, of violence and triumphant iniquity, when it was no small praise for those who were contending in the cause of human improvement, that they had not despaired of mankind; *quod non desperassent de rebus humanis*. They, like the Trojan hero, have asked for no omen, but that one bes tomen,—Εις οιωνος αριστος,—the cause in which they were engaged. But we are living in a different state of things. There are, without doubt, those, to whom all extended regard for the happiness and improvement of their fellow-men, seems an idle and visionary thing. It is lamentable that it should be so; and it is a lamentable mistake, if any one, feeling this indifference, supposes, at the same time, that he has the spirit of that religion whose founder "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." But there is a living spring of virtue and happiness, whose waters have as yet been not a little choked up, and its channels not a little obstructed. There is a purifying and animating principle, whose influences have as yet been very partially felt. It is true, rational, practical religion. Has this no tendency, and no power, to produce those effects, which every good and every wise man must desire so ardently? Even if experience had not long ago answered the question, still there could be no doubt what answer must be given. But we are every day witnessing its effects upon the characters of those around us. Some men, it is true, in their zeal for supporting a system, or in their unwillingness to acknowledge the existence of virtues which they do not possess, have uttered calumnies against our nature, and against God who gave us our nature. But he must have suffered through some singular misfortune, or some singular fault, who has advanced far in life, without witnessing and experiencing much disinterested kindness, much public spirit, much generous exertion, much moral purity, and much conscientious integrity. Imperfect as the best of men may be, there are in every rank of life those, to whom, if all were like, the world would present a wonderfully

different aspect from what it does at present. How have the characters of such men been formed? How is it that those whom we can most trust, esteem and love, have become what they are? The general answer is, that their characters have been formed under the influence of religious principle, by the continual action of those great practical truths which religion enforces. They may be of different sects; they may profess different creeds; they may even fancy that they are wide asunder from each other; but they are not. Their *practical* religion is the same. There is but one kind of practical religion in the world. It consists of those great, all-important truths, which wise and good men hold in common. It is to these truths, that we wish to give their full unimpeded efficacy. It is these truths, which we wish to bring into action, unembarrassed and unopposed by the errors that have been connected with them. It is for these truths, which have been the master principles in forming the characters of the most excellent of men, that we wish to procure more general reception; and it is for these truths, that we would vindicate their peculiar and preeminent authority. All our hopes for the welfare of man are identified with our hopes for the prevalence of true religion. And this is opposed, and has been opposed but too effectually, by those false doctrines; for which so many are yet earnestly contending. They are among the chief causes, counteracting that one great cause, to which we must look almost alone for the effective production of good. The rational and enlightened Christian, when he finds men zealously and pertinaciously defending errors, which grossly misrepresent our religion, and expose it to disbelief and contempt, will be ready to use language, like that which Tertullian addressed to the heretics of his time, *Parce spei unicæ mundi*—'Spare the only hope of mankind.'

In our endeavors to promote the influence of rational religion, what are the obstacles which present themselves? They are, in the first place, prescriptive errors and traditionary prejudices. But these are every day losing their

strength. There are others indeed beside these. There are those principles in man, those selfish and vile passions, by which every effort of the moralist and philosopher, no matter ~~from what direction it may proceed~~, is equally opposed. They present, therefore, no peculiar discouragement in the present case. Are the truths for which we contend, intrinsically difficult to be understood? The answer has been given by an apostle: *The doctrine is nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the doctrine of faith which we are preaching.* The answer has been given by a prophet: *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* The prospect which true religion opens to the mind, displays a beautiful and solemn grandeur, to which that of the visible heavens forms but a faint comparison; but it is with one as with the other; we need not travel far, nor search for our point of view, in order to behold all that is given us to see of the moral or of the physical universe. Is it impossible to render the practical operation of these truths, more general and effective? Is it impossible, when religion joins her voice, to that which experience has been so long uttering, to make men believe and feel, at last, that their duty and their interest are the same; that the laws of God are but directions which he has given us in his infinite wisdom and mercy, for attaining our highest happiness; that it is better to be just and benevolent, honored and beloved, than to be selfish, unjust, and cruel, despised, distrusted, and hated; that it is unwise to sacrifice a great future good to a present indulgence, which leaves behind it dissatisfaction and repentance; and that he who submits the moral part of his nature to the animal, is degrading himself, and destroying his best capacities for enjoyment? Is it impossible that the generality of men in a Christian land should be brought to act, as if they really believed these truths, and truths such as these? Whether it be so or not, yet remains to be determined. The experiment has never been made. These principles have, indeed, governed the

what ~~form~~ form it may assume

lives of many. They are familiar to the moralist, the philosopher, and the well educated man. The whole revelation of Jesus Christ was intended to inforce these truths. But they have not been inforced, nor have they been taught in the popular systems of religion. These systems have made a wide separation between real virtue, and what they have taught men to consider as the characteristics of a Christian. Do you believe that the religion of Spain or Italy, has had an effect to elevate and purify the morals and the minds of the inhabitants of those countries, at all corresponding to the effect which true Christianity would have produced? Do you receive our faith in its purity, and can you believe that the doctrines of Calvin have had much tendency to develope the higher powers and better affections of man? Do you believe that they have flourished under such culture; and that those doctrines have really operated very efficaciously in producing reverence, love, and gratitude toward Him, who has formed us under his curse; and active and warm-hearted benevolence toward the thoroughly depraved, and inexpressibly odious beings, our fellow men? The tendency of every prevalent system of false religion, has been to call away the attention of men from the practice of moral goodness, and to direct it to some other object. All such systems have presented some substitute for what true religion requires. They have misapplied the sanctions of Christianity, diverting them from their great purpose. They have provided some hiding place and shelter for the baser passions; and these, in return, have often been most zealous in their defence. This is the great characteristic distinction between true religion and false; that the former directs all its motives and sanctions to the production of real moral excellence; and that the latter sets up something else as the object of its requisitions and promises. The belief of a creed, the belonging to a particular sect, zeal for the church, zeal for orthodoxy, even a readiness to engage in the work of persecution, ~~the self infliction~~ of bodily torture, the practice of useless austerities, the endurance of

the infliction upon one's self

useless privations, absolutions purchased with money from a miserable fellow-sinner, reliance upon substituted merit, a fancied miraculous change of character, the being elected to salvation by an arbitrary and irreversible decree, these, and other similar distinctions, and means, have all been sanctioned, or countenanced, by different modes of false religion among Christians, as pledges of the favor of God, and passports to eternal happiness. Amid the triumph of these different errors, true moral excellence, the one, and the only thing needful, has been regarded with about as much favor, as a deposed monarch might expect from usurpers, who had seized upon, and divided his kingdom. Make yourself acquainted with the true characters of many of those, with whom one or another system of false religion has peopled heaven, and consider whether it be desirable that the number of such men should be multiplied upon earth? Are we to expect any thing very much resembling the influence of true religion, from systems, which hold up so false a standard of moral excellence? If we are not, the experiment is yet to be made, which shall determine what that influence may be.

It is the indissoluble union between the religious opinions of men and their moral characters, which renders the former a subject of so much importance and interest. The controversies which exist respecting religious doctrines, are not, as some seem to believe, mere disputes among theologians, about speculative opinions and scholastic subtilties; they are a contest between truth and error, upon subjects of a practical importance, that cannot be estimated. They concern opinions, which lie at the very foundation of our hopes, our principles, our affections, our whole characters; and which, as they are true or false, useful or pernicious, communicate their complexion and features to the whole aspect of society. They are controversies between truth and error, respecting essential doctrines in the highest department of human knowledge. The present state of things is the result of the march of intellectual improvement, which advancing rapidly elsewhere,

has been stopped, and thrown back, and broken, by the prejudices that have entrenched themselves on religious ground. No one interested in the well-being of his fellow men, is privileged to stand aloof, and look on with indifference. There is a moral obligation upon every man, similar to that law which bound the citizens of Athens in their civil divisions, to take part with one side or the other. Those theologians who are engaged in defending the truth, are engaged in maintaining the great cause of intellectual improvement, of good morals, of civil and religious freedom, of rational piety, of human happiness,—of mankind. They have a right to expect the aid of all who are interested in the same objects. They have a right to expect, that those who are employed in other intellectual pursuits, and other efforts to benefit their fellow men, will not so separate and disconnect themselves, as they have sometimes done, through misapprehension of the importance of the controversy, and through disgust at the style of reasoning, and modes of attack, which they must ~~hereto~~ encounter. Are you interested in advancing human knowledge, and can you think it a matter of indifference, whether men hold the grossest errors or the sublimest truths, concerning the very highest objects of speculation? You can hardly help feeling some degree of indignation and contempt, toward those who condemned Galileo to the prisons of the Inquisition, for teaching the motion of the earth; or toward the men, who calumniated and persecuted Harvey, because he made known the circulation of the blood. You respect the good sense and courage of those, by whom these truths were first maintained, in opposition to surrounding ignorance and prejudice. But nobody will think it too much to say, that these truths are not to be compared in importance, with those which relate to the nature, character, and moral government of God; and to the condition, duty, and destination of man. You are desirous of diffusing the blessings of instruction through the community, of carrying knowledge and light to the poor man's dwelling. Is there any knowledge which will be of such value to him as the knowledge

of his duty and his hopes; as that knowledge which will make him a good citizen, which will reconcile him to his situation, and which may, at the same time, raise him to an essential equality with the most favoured of mankind? You are interested, generally, in the well-being of your fellow-men; you are ready to afford your aid to those who would lessen the amount of abuses and evils, of crimes and miseries, which prey upon society; you admire the intense energy of moral feeling which carried Howard, as a minister of good, wherever human wretchedness was to be found; you know how to estimate the patient, untired, unyielding efforts of those who have almost succeeded in relieving the civilized world from the curse and the infamy of the slave-trade; you at least give your good wishes to those who would save mankind from the guilt and the horrors of war; you are interested in every plan of enlightened benevolence;—is it possible then, that you can be uninterested in asserting the character of those truths, and giving efficacy to those principles, which are the support and strength of all the social virtues, and without the belief of which, true, self-denying, persevering benevolence would find no dwelling place upon earth? The belief of these truths has formed the characters of that class of men in society, on whom the good order and happiness of the community depend, and from whom alone you can look for safe auxiliaries, in all endeavors to reform the evils which are in the world, and improve the human condition. This belief alone can give birth to that disinterested love of virtue, and of mankind, which pursues its object through good report, and through evil report, through opposition and danger and suffering; and has pursued it even into the arms of death. It is this belief which creates the well disposed citizen, the real patriot, and the enlightened and practical philosopher. If you doubt the value and efficacy of true religion, look to experience and look to human nature. If you do not doubt it, can you fail to give your aid to those who would vindicate its character and extend its influence?

THE END.

Norton, Andrews.
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# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY IN CAMBRIDGE,

AT THE INTERMENT

OF

# Professor Frisbie.

JULY XII. MDCCCXXII.

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BY ANDREWS NORTON,

DEXTER PROFESSOR OF SACRED LITERATURE.

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# ADDRESS.

THE relations between man and man cease not with life. The dead leave behind them their memory, their example, and the effects of their actions. Their influence still abides with us. Their names and characters dwell in our thoughts and hearts. We live and commune with them in their writings. We enjoy the benefit of their labours. Our institutions have been founded by them. We are surrounded by the works of the dead. Our knowledge and our arts are the fruit of their toil. Our minds have been formed by their instructions. We are most intimately connected with them by a thousand dependencies. Those whom we have loved in life are still





objects of our deepest and holiest affections. Their power over us remains. They are with us in our solitary walks; and their voices speak to our hearts in the silence of midnight. Their image is impressed upon our dearest recollections, and our most sacred hopes. They form an essential part of our treasure laid up in heaven. For above all, we are separated from them but for a little time. We are soon to be united with them. If we follow in the path of those whom we have loved, we too shall soon join the innumerable company of the spirits of just men made perfect. Our affections and our hopes are not buried in the dust, to which we commit the poor remains of mortality. The blessed retain their remembrance and their love for us in heaven; and we will cherish our remembrance and our love for them while on earth.

Creatures of imitation and sympathy as we are, we look around us for support and countenance even in our virtues. We recur for them most securely to the examples of the dead. There is a degree of insecurity and uncertainty about living worth. The stamp

has not yet been put upon it, which precludes all change, and seals it as a just object of admiration for future times. There is no service which a man of commanding intellect can render his fellow creatures, better than that of leaving behind him an unspotted example. If he do not confer upon them this benefit; if he leave a character, dark with vices in the sight of God, but dazzling with shining qualities to the view of men; it may be that all his other services had better have been forborne, and he had passed inactive and unnoticed through life. It is a dictate of wisdom, therefore, as well as feeling, when a man eminent for his virtues and talents has been taken away, to collect the riches of his goodness, and add them to the treasury of human improvement. The true Christian *liveth not for himself, and dieth not for himself;* and it is thus, in one respect, that he dieth not for himself.

We have come together now for the purpose of such recollections. We have come together to give each other the consolation and support of our sympathy. We have come to be made better by the considerations, which an event

the most solemn, and of general and deep concern to us all, and to many more than to us, presses upon our minds. We have come together to pay, certainly not the last tribute, but the first, to the memory of one, whose remembrance will never pass away from the hearts of those who have loved him. We have come to recollect those virtues which are now lost to us, but which are safe in the keeping of God.

I cannot venture, if I would, to excite your feelings, for I must repress my own, as I can. But there is no danger that you will not hear me with sufficient interest. The grave is just about to close upon all that now remains in this world of one whose genius was as rich, whose heart was as warm, whose virtue was as firm, whose understanding was as clear and vigorous, as we may ever hope in the intercourse of life to find thus united again. There is an eloquence in the dumb show that surrounds us, to which all words are weak.

The last recollections, which are left upon my mind of him whom we have lost, are of his expressions of deep religious feeling, and





of those strong but humble hopes, which are now changed into certainty. These recollections connect themselves at once with all that I know of his character and life.

He was a religious man; in the high and true sense of the words; and to say that one is truly a religious man, is to say, that he comprehends and feels those relations by which, and by which alone, our nature is ennobled; that all which is most glorious and exalting in our conceptions of infinity and eternity, has become to him a matter of habitual belief; that he knows himself to be the creature of God, holding a rank in the universe, immeasurably higher than what the mere man of this world can imagine; and that he is under the uniform control of expectations and motives, the tendency of which is to raise him above all vulgar and selfish feelings, and to invigorate all that are pure and generous. The religion of him whom we mourn, was not of that spurious kind, which borrows its heat from the meaner passions. They furnished no fuel for its support. It burnt clear and steadily upon the altar of his

heart, and the temple within was filled with its fragrance. His religion was the controlling principle of his life. It manifested itself, as it always does, when it thoroughly pervades and forms the character, not in artificial exhibitions for the view of mankind, not unseasonably and impertinently, but by that natural recurrence to its motives and sanctions, which appears, whenever the occasion demands it, in the conduct and conversation of a sincere and rational Christian. He had studied the evidences of our religion, with a very acute and clear mind, whose natural tendency, from his high integrity, and from his dread of all unfairness, was to admit objections and difficulties in at least their full strength; and there is no one whose faith was more firm than his. He perceived the force of its external proofs, he understood its infinite value, he felt the divinity of its character, he made it the foundation of his hopes. His views of religion were very serious; and he was earnest that it should always be presented to men as incomparably their most solemn consideration. The feelings of no one could be more abhorrent

from all levity and indifference upon this subject; and from regarding it under a mere worldly aspect.

If those who knew him best, were called upon to mention any virtue by which he was particularly distinguished, I believe they would unite in naming INTEGRITY. He was a man, who, if ever any one could, might have told the world his purposes, and have risen in their respect. If you were to determine, whether he would pursue any particular course of conduct, or aim at any particular object, you had only to determine, whether he would think that object right, and that course of conduct his duty; and you were sure that no selfish or mean passion, and no sinister purpose, would interfere to lead insensibly his judgment astray. You knew and felt that you could rely in perfect security upon his truth, sincerity, and openness. There were no false appearances about him. He had nothing of that disguise and cunning which is sometimes mistaken for policy. His conduct lay before you in broad day-light; and you never were at a loss for his motives, and you





never perceived any but what were honourable. I know the force of the language I am using. It is the last occasion on which I should suffer myself to indulge in idle and unfounded praise. It is an occasion far too solemn and painful. I will speak of him with the truth which he loved. If it were possible I should not, his image, which is continually recurring to my mind, would bring admonition and shame along with it.

His notions of right and wrong were founded upon the laws of religion and of God, and not upon the maxims of the world. He compared his actions not with the opinions and sentiments of the day, but with the eternal principles of morality. He was not an harsh censor of men; he was ready to perceive what might be pleaded in excuse for their follies, and errors, and imperfections; but he never treated vices with levity. There is a passage of Tacitus, to which I have heard him repeatedly allude with strong approbation; and his reference to it shews the character of his own moral sentiments. It is where that historian, speaking of the manners of the Germans, says, that 'no

one among them laughs at vices, nor is corrupting and being corrupted called the way of the world.' Nemo illic vitia *ridet*, nec corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocatur.

He was a public man. His life was spent in public services, and he was interested in every thing, by which the public welfare could be promoted. Natural weakness of constitution, and disease, as you know, affecting his eyes, and almost depriving him of their use for the purposes of study, opposed a constant obstacle to his efforts to do good, which it required more than common resolution to overcome. But he did overcome it. He made the best use of all the high intellectual powers which God had given him, and of all the bodily faculties which God, in his providence, permitted him to retain. He was a most faithful and valuable officer of this University. No one has contributed more to its respectability and usefulness. No one had juster views of the proper objects of such an institution, or of the means by which they are to be attained. No one could be more solicitous, that it should be distinguished for religion and good morals,





as well as for its literary character. For the office which he formerly held, that of Professor of the Latin language, he was peculiarly fitted by his fine taste, and by his just discrimination of the meaning and force of language, the result of accurate thinking. For the duties which he last performed, as instructer in Moral Philosophy, he was equally qualified by his activity of mind, by his distinctness of thought, by his clearness of expression, by his metaphysical acuteness under the direction of strong good sense, and above all, by the delicacy and purity of his moral principles and feelings. But it was not only in the performance of his professional duties that he served the university; he rendered it as essential a service by the example of his life, by the pervading influence of his correctness of thought and sentiment, and by giving the whole weight of a character, which none could know without respecting, to the advancement of moral and intellectual excellence. This is an indefinite service, of which it is not easy to estimate the exceeding value

As a writer, from the physical causes to which I have before alluded, he gave to the world, during his life, but few proofs and memorials of his fine genius. You are well acquainted with the manner in which these have been estimated, by all to whom they have become known. I will not now dwell upon the condensation of thought, and the beauty and richness of imagery which they exhibit. They are marked by another characteristic, in the consciousness of which he would himself have felt far deeper pleasure. It is by their truth of sentiment, and high moral feeling. Such is the unnatural love of every sort of excitement which prevails among a portion of readers at the present day, that it appears to be sometimes forgotten, that the moral character of writings is a matter of consideration. But moral perfection is the highest object of a correct taste, and the true and complete exhibition of it in writing is scarcely less difficult than its practice in life. There is nothing false in that splendid revelation of ancient philosophy, that perfect goodness and perfect beauty are the same. It is not the

work of a common intellect or vulgar taste, to diffuse over its writings the holy charm of moral loveliness. It is the result of a union between genius and virtue. There are hundreds of authors yet borne up by popular fame, whose minds were of far too inferior an order, to be conversant with those sentiments and principles which are the living springs of beauty. There are too, at the present day, as there probably always have been, many writers and many readers, who seem to think that correctness of sentiment is of little importance, provided the expression be happily turned or highly colored. Thus it is, that a great deal passes for fine writing, which has very little claim to the character, since truth and goodness are essential requisites to excellence, and the first demands of a cultivated taste and enlightened judgment. In whatever was written by him whom we have lost, they were found united. His writings corresponded to his life. They reflected, as in a clear mirror, his heart and his understanding.

I have thus given, faintly and imperfectly, some sketch of the character of him whose

loss we deplore. When such men are taken from us, we are made to feel the instability of life, and the insecurity of the tenure by which we hold its dearest blessings. But this feeling will be of little value, if it do not lead us to look beyond this world, and if it be not thus connected with a strong sense of the proper business of life, to prepare ouselves for happiness in that world, where there shall be no change but from glory to glory. It will be in vain for us to contemplate such a character as we have been regarding, if we do not feel that its foundation was in that religion, which teaches every one of us to regard himself as created by God, to be *an image of his own eternity.* It will be in vain for us to stand by the open grave of departed worth, if no earthly passion grows cool, and no holy purpose gains strength.

We are liable in this world to continual delusion; to a most extravagant over-estimate of the value of its objects. With respect to many of our cares and pursuits, the sentiment expressed in the words of David, must have borne with all its truth and force upon the mind of every considerate man, in some





moments at least of serious reflection: *Surely every one walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain.* The events of the next month or the next year, often assume in our eyes a most disproportionate importance; and almost exclude from our view all the other infinite variety of concerns and changes, which are to follow in the course of an immortal existence. The whole happiness of our being seems sometimes to be at stake upon the success of a plan, which, when we have grown but a little older, we may regard with indifference. These are subjects on which reason too commonly speaks to us in vain. But there is one lesson, that God sometimes gives us, which brings the truth home to our hearts. There is an admonition which addresses itself directly to our feelings, and before which they bow in humility and tears. We can hardly watch the gradual decay of a man eminent for virtue and talents, and hear him uttering, with a voice that will soon be heard no more, the last expressions of piety and holy hope, without feeling that the delusions of life are losing their power over

our minds. Its true purposes begin to appear to us in their proper distinctness. We are accompanying one who is about to take his leave of present objects; to whom the things of this life merely are no longer of any interest or value. The eye which is still turned to us with kindness, will, in a few days, be closed forever. The hand by which ours is still pressed, will be motionless. The affections which are still warm and vivid,—they will not perish; but we shall know nothing of their exercise. We shall be cut off from all expression and return of sympathy. He whom we love is taking leave of us for an undefined period of absence. We are placed with him on the verge between this world and the eternity into which he is entering; we look before us; and the objects of the latter rise to view, in all their vast and solemn magnificence.

There is, I well know, an anguish which may preclude this calmness of reflection and hope. Our resolution may be prostrated to the earth, for he on whom we were accustomed to rely for strength and support has been taken away. We return to the world and there is bitterness

in all it presents us, for every thing bears impressed upon it a remembrance of what we have lost. It has one, and but one, miserable consolation to offer :

" That anguish will be wearied down, I know.
What pang is permanent with man ? From th' highest,
As from the vilest thing of every day,
He learns to wean himself. For the strong hours
Conquer him."

It is a consolation, which, offered in this naked and offensive form, we instinctively reject. Our recollections and our sorrows, blended as they are together, are far too dear to be parted with upon such terms. But God giveth not as the world giveth. There is a peace which comes from him, and brings healing to the heart. His religion would not have us forget, but cherish, our affections for the dead, for it makes known to us, that these affections shall be immortal. It gradually takes away the bitterness of our recollections, and changes them into glorious hopes; for it teaches us to regard the friend who is with us no longer, not as one whom we have lost on earth, but as one whom we shall meet, as an angel, in heaven.

# OBITUARY NOTICE

EXTRACTED FROM THE BOSTON DAILY ADVERTISER OF JULY 13.

[WRITTEN BY PROF. FARRAR.]

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The interests of literature and religion have sustained a loss in the death of Mr. Frisbie, fully known only to those who were particularly acquainted with him. He sought retirement, and avoided those occasions by which uncommon endowments are ordinarily brought into public estimation. It is difficult to speak of his powers and attainments, without seeming extravagant to those who had not the opportunity of judging for themselves. But there is no apprehension of a want of sympathy from any who have seen him intimately. To his classmates, to his associates in office, to his pupils, to all whose lot it has been to fall within the circle of his familiar walks, the





appeal is made with confidence. To these, in a greater or less degree, but more especially to such as were favoured with his confidence and affection, the treasures of his mind were poured forth with a richness and abundance that have been rarely equalled. It was not in maintaining striking paradoxes, in a useless display of argument and eloquence, that his talents were exerted. Truth and virtue were always held sacred; and nothing was so sure to feel the severity of his rebuke, as a departure from either. Disputed questions in theology, morals, and metaphysics, the peculiar merits and defects of recent publications, were among his favourite topics. On these it was his delight, not to harangue those around him, but to converse with them, to excite a disposition to join in a free and unreserved interchange of thought, and many have found themselves drawn unawares into a discussion by the novel and interesting view presented to them.

He endeavoured always to give a philosophical turn to whatever subject came before him, and although his mind was full of

resources for maintaining and enforcing a cause which he chose to espouse, he habitually regarded the splendid schemes and hypotheses of inventive genius with distrust, and was inclined to pay great respect to the sober judgment of the uneducated, and to what may be called the philosophy of common sense. He possessed uncommon acuteness and discrimination, and would sometimes appear to speculate with great freedom, but he was cautious and guarded in an uncommon degree, as to what he himself adopted. He ventured to depart from the prevailing sentiments of the learned on some speculative points of intellectual and moral philosophy. Among the improvements which are considered as doing so much honour to Brown, his pupils will recognize doctrines which he has long maintained with great ingenuity and eloquence.

Besides an originality and justness in his views and speculations, there was a clearness and lucid order in the arrangement of his thoughts, even on the most abstruse and difficult subjects, which he seldom failed to impart

to his hearers, while at the same time he fixed their attention by the energy of his manner, the copiousness and propriety of his language, the fertility and aptness of his illustrations.

On account of weakness of sight he was obliged to depend on others for his knowledge of books. Still his knowledge was various and accurate.—Beside the subjects more immediately connected with his profession, he was familiar with English literature, especially with the more recent authors. He was particularly fond of the best works of fiction, and had a high opinion of their utility. But he carefully distinguished between those that maintained a pure and elevated morality, and such as were designed merely to amuse an idle fancy. His pointed reprobation of corrupt sentiments united with poetry of whatever excellence, his high but qualified praise of Miss Edgeworth, as expressed in his inaugural address, are, we doubt not, fresh in the recollection of many who heard him on that occasion for the first and only time.

Mr. Frisbie's decided belief in the truth of the Christian religion was not the result of

education. He had read and thought much on its evidences and its doctrines. He took a lively interest in the theological discussions of the day, and made up his mind upon controverted points, with great candour and deliberation, and was exerting the happiest influence in the theological school, in which he took an important part.

He was, moreover, a practical, as well as a theoretical Christian. This was manifest from his uniform sobriety of mind and conduct, his inflexible integrity, his purity, sincerity, and conscientiousness, in all the relations he sustained, his fidelity in his public duties, his observance of the Christian ordinances, and respect for all the institutions of religion. It was particularly conspicuous in his last sickness. Few have had brighter prospects to resign. He was surrounded with friends in whom he took the greatest delight. He had but just entered upon the ripe period of manhood. He held an office peculiarly suited to his taste and talents, and of great importance to the cause of truth and virtue, and which he filled with distinguished honour





to himself and benefit to the community. He resigned all, and resigned all cheerfully. He bowed in quiet and calm submission to the will of God, with a firm hope, through his mercy in Jesus Christ, of a better inheritance in another world.

Norton's

# Review

OF

# PROFESSOR FRISBIE'S ADDRESS.

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1823.



# REVIEW

OF

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# REVIEW.

We, in this country, have great reason to congratulate ourselves upon the rapid improvement, which has taken place, within a few years, in the state of our literature. Without doubt there is not, in any nation, so large a proportion of readers of some degree of cultivation and refinement. One of the most striking evidences of our literary improvement is to be found in the character of many of our popular addresses, which indicate at once the talents of the speaker, and the estimate which he has formed of the information, good taste, and good sense of those whom he is addressing. Of these it would be impossible to select a more favorable specimen, than the discourse now under review, which, though pronounced before the University in Cambridge, upon the occasion of the author's inauguration as Professor, may yet be regarded as a *popular address*, when we consider the numerous audience which attends upon such occasions. It is

partly as affording evidence of the good state of our literature, that we are desirous of directing the public attention to it; but principally on account of its intrinsic value. We are persuaded that, so far as we are able to make it more known, we are doing service to the cause of letters, and of morals.

The subjects of the Address are the necessity, the objects, and the influence of Moral Philosophy, in the most extensive sense of the term.

'Moral philosophy, in strict propriety, is the science of the principles and obligation of duty; but, in the observations I may now make, I shall have reference also to all those studies and inquiries, which have for their object the knowledge and improvement of the moral condition of man.'

In speaking of the necessity of moral science, the author is employed in answering the objections which may be made to it. These are to be resolved into notions which sometimes are expressly avowed; but which more frequently, perhaps, float loosely in men's minds, without forming themselves into fixed and well defined opinions.

'The doctrine of a moral sense has furnished the first objection to the necessity of moral science. It has often been said, the heart is the best casuist, and its natural promptings the safest guides in duty. But in respect to









this objection it must be carefully remembered, that we are not to form our estimate of the value of natural conscience from the prevalent opinions of civilized and christian countries. The moral sense of the most unlearned at the present day is not the sense of nature, but of cultivation; it has been modified by the studies and experience of ages, and, above all, by the christian religion. It is not denied, that we have from nature a moral as well as an intellectual capacity; but the former, no less than the latter, is to be improved and enlarged by observation and thought. Many duties arise from relations, which are complicated and remote; these relations must be investigated and brought together, and general principles, which may be settled into rules, deduced from them. The necessity of this is sufficiently shown by the different and contradictory maxims of duty, that have prevailed in different ages and nations. Were, however, the original suggestions of uncultivated conscience far clearer and more decisive, than experience will allow us to believe, still the necessity of philosophy would not be superseded. The unremitted labors of the moralist would notwithstanding be required, to relieve the sentiments of mankind from those associations of prejudice, of fashion, and of false opinion, which have so constant an influence in perverting the judgment and corrupting the heart, and to bring them back to the unbiassed dictates of nature and common sense. Besides, the moral constitution of man, his relations, and duties, are subjects too interesting, and too fruitful of remark, to be neglected in the speculations





of the ingenious and inquiring. Erroneous theories will be formed; nay they will be presented to mankind as the rule of life; and even history and fiction be made vehicles of principles, dangerous alike to virtue and to peace. While indeed these speculations of false philosophy are wrapped in metaphysical subtilties, they may excite little alarm, and serve rather to amuse the learned; they are those eccentric lightnings, that play harmlessly in the evening cloud; but when they are made the maxims of common life, or, embodied in popular fiction, find their way into the hearts of men, they are these same lightnings concentrated and brought down to earth, blasting and consuming. The safety of society then requires, that such systems be subjected to the jealous scrutiny of a sound philosophy, and that there be men, whose habits and studies will lead them to a rigid superintendence of whatever is proposed; to give authority to truth, and to detect and expose what is only specious and insinuating. If our moral being could be left, as it came from the hands of its Creator, to the simple and wholesome viands of nature, if it breathed only the pure atmosphere of truth, it might perhaps preserve the soundness of health, and the ingenuous suffusions of virtue; but pampered, as it is, with false philosophy and factitious sentiment, the antidote should grow with the poison. There will always be a Hobbes, a Rousseau, or a Godwin; let us then have also our Cudworths, our Butlers, and our Stewarts.[5]

Besides the other obvious beauties of the extract just quoted, we may remark one, which is characteristic of the whole discourse—the compression of thought, and the variety of topics, which, within a very narrow compass, are brought to bear upon the subject without disorder or obscurity.

The other objection remarked upon is, that the Scriptures furnish us with a perfect rule of right; and that, therefore, it is unnecessary to have recourse to the deductions of human reason. The answer to this is as follows.

'The morality of the Scriptures is preceptive, and not theoretic; it enjoins dispositions, without showing their relative subordination, or specifying the actions that flow from them; it commands duties, but does not teach principles; nor was it possible, that its precepts, however numerous, should extend to all the variety of daily occurring cases. It is necessary for the Christian to analyse the moral rules of his religion, to trace them to their principles, and again from these principles to deduce new rules, and, by a knowledge of the reason of each, understand its ever varying accommodation to varying circumstances. Through a neglect of these considerations, what enormities have not been perpetrated by men, with the Bible in their hands, from a wrong application of its precepts and examples? It is in this, as in the science of law, innumerable as are the provisions of statutes and cases, still that counsellor would be ill prepared to advise his





client, who had not learned to distinguish the principle from the facts, and thus to judge how far the former might be affected by the minutest change in the latter. There is a legal mind, a law logic, more important to the professor, than a knowledge of all the precedents in all the books without it.'

In conformity with these remarks, we may observe, that it was not the design of revelation to teach a *complete system of morality*. The fundamental rules of conduct were distinctly stated; and duties, the obligation of which had not been recognized, or the practice of which had been generally disregarded, were strongly inculcated; such, for instance, as the duty of christian charity, in the most extensive, and of christian purity, in the more limited sense of the words. But direct instruction in other duties was rather incidental, than essential to its main purpose. There is so much truth and good sense in the remarks of Dr. Paley upon this subject, that we will venture to give an extract from him of some length. 'The teaching of morality was not the primary design of the mission of Christ.' —— 'If I were to describe, in a very few words, the scope of Christianity, as a *revelation*, I should say, that it was to influence the conduct of human life, by establishing the proof of a future state of reward and punishment—"to bring life and

immortality to light." The direct object, therefore, of the design is, to supply motives, and not rules; sanctions, and not precepts. And these were what mankind stood most in need of. The members of civilized society can, in all ordinary cases, judge tolerably well how they ought to act; but without a future state, or, which is the same thing, without credited evidence of that state, they want a *motive* to their duty; they want, at least, strength of motive, sufficient to bear up against the force of passion, and the temptation of present advantage. Their rules want authority. The most important service that can be rendered to human life, and that, consequently which, one might expect beforehand, would be the great end and office of a revelation from God, is to convey to the world authorized assurances of the reality of a future existence. And although in doing this, or by the ministry of the same person by whom this is done, moral precepts or examples, or illustrations of moral precepts, may be occasionally given, and be highly valuable, yet still they do not form the original purpose of the mission.'* To this statement there seems to us little to be objected, except that Dr. Paley has given an imperfect view of the design of revelation

* Paley's Evidences, P. II. c. 2.

as intended to instruct men in *religious* truth. Not merely the doctrine of a future state was to be made known to men upon certain evidence, but the character of God likewise; and to all, but the Jews, his very existence and moral government.

After the passage last quoted from his address, Professor Frisbie, that he may not be misunderstood, notices 'the unspeakable importance of the aids revelation affords to the christian moralist, and the strong light it throws over the region of his inquiries.'

'The Bible has taught us the being and attributes of God with a clearness and certainty, to which nature had made but the feeblest approaches; while at the same time, particularly in the New Testament, it gives many plain rules in almost every branch of duty. From what a maze of paradox and doubt, in which heathen philosophers were continually bewildered and perplexed, are we now extricated by a few simple and sublime truths? Accordingly, we can scarcely read a page of a christian moralist, but we find him limiting, controlling, or supporting principles, by appeals to the acknowledged doctrines of revealed theology; while the practical rules are so many beacons along the road, to mark his course, and light him on his way. To investigate the principle of an admitted rule, is much easier, and followed by conclusions far more satisfactory, than when the principle and the

rule are both to be discovered. And when we proceed still further, to trace out new principles, and deduce new rules, our inquiries are guided, and our conclusions tried, by truths already known. The parts supplied must be suited to those we possess; as our theories involve consequences, that contradict or harmonize with the plain maxims of the gospel, we know them to be false, or may presume them to be true.

'In conformity with these remarks, how different has been the practical application of the same theories, as they have been followed out into their consequences by sceptical or christian moralists. The systems of Godwin and Paley are both founded on the same general principle of utility. This principle led the author of the Political Justice to consequences, that would sever not only the ties of intimate affection, but the very bonds of social order. These consequences, he who admits the principle, may find it difficult to avoid; yet the Archdeacon of Carlisle, guided and controlled by the doctrines of the the Bible, connected it with rules of conduct, consistent with the truest reason and purest virtue. Mr. Hume, aware of the cause of such differences, has lamented the unnatural alliance, which in modern times has united theology with morals; but he, who well considers the exact coincidence of the instructions of Jesus Christ with the deepest principles of our nature, and the soundest deductions of philosophy, will find reasons, hardly less impressive than the miracles themselves, for believing that he was a teacher sent from God, and knew what was in man.'





The author next remarks upon the characteristic value of revelation, as having furnished the highest motives and sanctions of duty; and then proceeds to speak of the objects of moral science.

'The *objects of moral science* are implied in what we have said of its *necessity*. They are to preserve from neglect or perversion the knowledge we already possess, to enlarge its boundaries, and strengthen its foundations, by new or clearer views of the nature and relations of man, and above all, to give it a practical influence upon the character and prospects of society.'

'Moral knowledge,' the author observes, 'cannot yet be supposed to have reached its limits. There are unexplored avenues before us, and gleams of light invite us onward.' He remarks that no theory of morals has yet received a general, much less a universal assent; and notices the uncertainty and difference of opinion, which exist respecting some questions of practical importance in private life. He then proceeds;

'In the relations of states, of rulers and subjects, the principles of morality and rules of conduct are still more indefinite and unsettled. That the law of nations is but the extension of those maxims of equity and kindness, which should regulate the intercourse of individuals, till of late seems, in practice at least, hardly to have been

conceived, Expediency rather than right has been the great spring of political motion, and diplomacy but another name for intrigue and duplicity. The representative, in his seat, will advocate with his voice, and support with his vote, measures, which the man, in the relations of private life, would blush to acknowledge. Nor is this want of just sensibility confined to the statesman; with the citizen, to defraud the public is too often but an achievement of ingenuity; and even the scholar in his closet, while he kindles with indignation at the injustice or cruelty of an individual, reads the aggressions and ravages of nations with hardly a sentiment, that they are crimes.

'Here then is much to be done; and there is also somewhat to encourage exertion. On these subjects are not juster views beginning to make their way? Negotiations are professed to be conducted more in the honorable spirit of frankness and conciliation. The laws, if not the practice, of civilized war have been softened into comparative mildness. Questions of national interest are debated, and the measures of governments examined, upon the broad basis of equity and truth, and statesmen compelled, if not to adopt, certainly to defend their plans of policy, not by reasons of state, but reasons of right. If all this be in pretence, more than in truth, still the necessity of hypocrisy is one proof of the existence of virtue. If the splendid pall be thrown over the bier, it is because men cannot bear the ghastliness of death.'

The author next considers, in what manner the objects mentioned by him are most successfully to be pursued;—and then follows the third and last head of the discourse, in which he treats of the practical influence of moral philosophy. Under this head, after some general observations upon the connexion of knowledge with virtue, he speaks of the effect which the study of moral science is adapted to have upon those by whom it is pursued. The remarks, which immediately succeed, we shall give at length.

'If the effect, we have described, be natural, it cannot be confined to the philosopher alone; it will extend itself in his instructions and writings. The same views will be gradually applied in the formation of the dispositions and habits of children; they will become an important branch of liberal knowledge; and thus exert a control over the higher classes of society, over men of letters and the popular authors of the day.

'This suggests to us another means of practical influence. Those compositions in poetry and prose, which constitute the literature of a nation, the essay, the drama, the novel, it cannot be doubted, have a most extensive and powerful operation upon the moral feelings and character of the age. The very business of the authors of such works is directly or indirectly with the heart. Even descriptions of natural scenery owe much of their beauty and interest to the moral associations they awaken. In

like manner fine turns of expression or thought often operate more by suggestion than enumeration. But when feelings and passions are directly described, or embodied in the hero, and called forth by the incidents of a story, it is then, that the magic of fiction and poetry is complete, that they enter into and dwell in the secret chambers of the very soul, moulding it at will. In these moments of deep excitement, must not a bias be given to the character, and much be done to elevate and refine, or degrade and pollute, those sympathies and sentiments, which are the sources of much of our virtue and happiness, or our guilt and misery? The danger is, that in such cases, we do not discriminate the distinct action of associated causes. Even in what is presented to the senses, we are aware of the power of habitual combination. An object, naturally disagreeable, becomes beautiful, because we have often seen the sun shine or the dew sparkle upon it, or it has been grouped in a scene of peculiar interest. Thus the powers of fancy and of taste blend associations in the mind, which disguise the original nature of moral qualities. A liberal generosity, a disinterested self-devotion, a powerful energy or deep sensibility of soul, a contempt of danger and death, are often so connected in story with the most profligate principles and manners, that the latter are excused and even sanctified by the former. The impression, which so powerfully seizes all the sympathies, is one; and the ardent youth becomes almost ambitious of a character, he ought to abhor. So too, sentiments, from which in their plain form delicacy would revolt, are insin-

uated with the charms of poetical imagery and expression; and even the coarseness of Fielding is probably less pernicious, than the seducing refinement of writers like Moore; whose voluptuous sensibility steals upon the heart and corrupts its purity, as the moon-beams, in some climates, are believed to poison the substances on which they fall.

'But in no productions of modern genius is the reciprocal influence of morals and literature more distinctly seen, than in those of the author of Childe Harold. His character produced the poems; and it cannot be doubted, that his poems are adapted to produce such a character. His heroes speak a language, supplied not more by imagination, than consciousness. They are not those machines, that, by a contrivance of the artist, send forth a music of their own; but instruments, through which he breathes his very soul, in tones of agonized sensibility, that cannot but give a sympathetic impulse to those who hear. The desolate misanthropy of his mind rises and throws its dark shade over his poetry, like one of his own ruined castles; we feel it to be sublime, but we forget, that it is a sublimity it cannot have, till it is abandoned by every thing, that is kind and peaceful and happy, and its halls are ready to become the haunts of outlaws and assassins. Nor are his more tender and affectionate passages those, to which we can yield ourselves without a feeling of uneasiness. It is not that we can here and there select a proposition formally false or pernicious; but that he leaves an impression unfavourable to a health-

ful state of thought and feeling, peculiarly dangerous to the finest minds and most susceptible hearts. They are the scene of a summer evening, where all is tender and beautiful and grand; but the damps of disease descend with the dews of heaven, and the pestilent vapors of night are breathed in with the fragrance and balm, and the delicate and fair are the surest victims of the exposure.

'Although I have illustrated the moral influence of literature, principally from its mischiefs; yet it is obvious, if what I have said be just, it may be rendered no less powerful, as a means of good. Is it not true that, within the last century, a decided and important improvement in the moral character of our literature has taken place; and had Pope and Smollet written at the present day, would the former have published the imitations of Chaucer, or the latter the adventures of Pickle and Random? Genius cannot now sanctify impurity or want of principle; and our critics and reviewers are exercising jurisdiction not only upon the literary but moral blemishes of the authors, that come before them. We notice with peculiar pleasure the sentence of just indignation, which the Edinburgh tribunal has pronounced upon Moore, Swift, Goethe, and in general the German sentimentalists. Indeed the fountains of literature, into which an enemy has sometimes infused poison, naturally flow with refreshment and health. Cowper and Campbell have led the muses to repose in the bowers of religion and virtue; and Miss Edgeworth has so cautiously combined the features of her characters, that the predominant expression is ever what it should be; she has shown us, not vices ennobled by virtues, but





virtues, degraded and perverted by their union with vices. The success of this lady has been great, but had she availed herself more of the motives and sentiments of religion, we think it would have been greater. She has stretched forth a powerful hand to the impotent in virtue; and had she added, with the apostle, 'in the name of Jesus of Nazareth,' we should almost have expected miracles from its touch.

It would not be easy to find a passage more distinguished for correctness of sentiment, and beauty of expression, than that which we have quoted. We wish that his subject, and the limits of his discourse, had allowed the author to enlarge somewhat upon the thoughts expressed in the beginning of the last paragraph. It is very gratifying to observe the gradual improvement in the moral character of English literature, since the reign of Charles II. and the period immediately subsequent. Many of the plays and poems of that day are such as we might fancy to be written in a world, that had been put out of the sphere of God's providence and moral government; among men who had heard of religion and morality indeed, as imposing obligations upon other creatures, but who felt themselves free from these restraints, and thought of them only as matters of ridicule;—whose main business was to pursue their gross pleas-

ures as long as they were able, and to cheat each other whenever they had an opportunity ; but who, at the same time, possessed that sort of mischievous ingenuity and quickness of wit, which have been fancied to be properties of evil spirits. Nothing could be more remote from the genius of the writers of this race, than the exhibition of those striking, but most unnatural characters, in which the fierce vices of pirates, and outlaws, and men of desperate wickedness, are united with a prevailing tone of romantic tenderness, of high sentiment, and of over-delicate and exasperated sensibility. Their characters have only the hard, impudent, diseased countenance of every day profligacy. They dwelt in their writings upon such vices as they relished, and introduced such personages as they associated with in common life. The literature of the age, in its prevailing character, was like Messalina coming from the stews ;—

> ' Obscurisque genis turpis, fumoque lucernæ
> Fœda, lupanaris tulit ad pulvinar odorem.'

We have not forgotten that Dryden was a writer of this age ; nor have we forgotten his indecency, his immorality, and his profaneness. Of Dryden we are almost afraid to say what we think. He versified with great facility, and often with great force and melody, though quite as often in a

very incorrect and slovenly style; he has much vigorous language, which gives a bold relief to his thoughts; he possessed not a little of the ingenuity of the metaphysical race of poets, tempered with considerably more good sense; and he was a very powerful, though coarse satirist; occasionally very skilful and acute in the delineation of character, (as in that of the Duke of Buckingham for instance,) for the purpose of ridicule or invective. 'They say,' he observes in one of his prefaces, 'my talent is satire;' and in this opinion, his contemporaries seem to have formed a correct estimate of his abilities. In the enumeration just given, we doubt whether we have not exhausted all his claims to great intellectual superiority. Nobody looks for pathos, or tenderness, or delicacy of thought or feeling, in the writings of Dryden. He has no sublimity of any kind; least of all, any thing that approaches to moral sublimity. He spreads before us no fine views of visible nature; he never carries us forth among the works of God to admire and be delighted. He was unable vividly to conceive and express human passions and feelings. He never seizes on our sympathy; he does not make us intimate with himself, nor interest us in those characters which he embodies and puts in action. Nature never gave to him those keys which open

her secret recesses. There is no magic in his verses; they produce no emotion; they are as little allied as possible to that poetry, which 'stirs a man's heart like the sound of a trumpet.' They discover much intellectual vigor, but possess no moral power. When not seasoned by the noxious stimulant of personal satire, his longer poems in heroic verse are uninteresting and tiresome. Who reads a second time his Palamon and Arcite; except as a mere literary critic, to be satisfied that his first judgment of it was correct? Who now reads through his Hind and Panther? We believe that but few have with us submitted to this unprofitable labor. No one rises from the perusal of his poetry better or wiser; with any thoughts, or feelings, or images, which a good man would wish to retain. In every thing relating to moral sentiment, the mind of Dryden was essentially coarse, vulgar, and depraved.

We regret that Mr. Scott should have given his time and talents to editing a complete edition of the works of this author. The poems of Dryden which are of any value, were sufficiently known; and it was not worth any one's while to bring together, and attempt to restore to life, those of his writings, which were perishing in their own corruption. We hope that the passion for collecting





and preserving every thing which has been written by an author of notoriety, will sometime or another be succeeded by the exercise of a discriminating judgment, which will reject what is not worth preservation.*

It would be very pleasant to trace the moral improvement of English literature, since the age of which we have been speaking. We think that the progress of this improvement is to be particularly remarked in our prose works of fiction. The novels of Smollet are of such a character, that if any one were to keep them on his table or in his library, and recur to them with much relish for relaxation or amusement, we should begin to fear that his taste for low humour had outgrown some other tastes much better worth cultivation. Fielding was a writer of more genius than Smollet. He has more invention, more wit, more character, and more thought. Nor does he introduce us into company quite so gross and offensive. A familiarity with his characters is not so much adapted to debase and brutalize the imagination and feelings. But the effect of his writings upon the moral principles is little less injurious than those of Smollet. Their

* We recollect a fine essay upon the subject of Mr. Scott's edition of Dryden's works, in a number of the Analectic Magazine, published some years since. We regret that we have not the work at hand, to refer to it more particularly.

prevailing tendency is to represent one as being better, more manly, and more pleasant, for having a few vices; and to teach us that those, who appear to be afraid of sinning, are in general little better than hypocrites and scoundrels.

We think that the best writers of prose fiction at the present day, are hardly less superior in genius, than in morality, to those whom we have mentioned. The author of Waverley and Guy Mannering might, without vanity, be little flattered by a comparison, which, in all the higher intellectual endowments, should put him far above such writers as Fielding and Smollet. And though with regard to Miss Edgeworth, some of the late English reviewers appear to have a little of the feeling of the Athenian, who was tired of hearing Aristides called the Just, yet for ourselves we continue to regard her with unabated admiration. She has faults and defects, without doubt; and the most important of them is that pointed out by the author of the address —the infrequency with which she *directly* brings into view religious principles and sentiments; though for this we think some reasons might be alleged not wholly without weight. But in truth and nature; in the correct conception and complete preservation of a great variety of characters; in her skill in adjusting together moral and intellectual

qualities, as they are really found combined in nature, so that the effect of her characters upon our moral feelings is always what it ought to be; in pointing out and tracing those influences which mould the affections and the understanding; in the admirable good sense of her remarks upon life, conduct and manners, which, from their acuteness, and from the manner of their introduction, remind us of the concentrated wisdom of Tacitus; in wit and refined humour, which are hardly equalled by those of Addison; in fertility and happiness of allusion; in her talent for introducing all that sort of information which admits of being incorporated into such works as she composes; in the finish and brilliancy of those passages in which she gives us the conversation of polished life; in touches of exquisite pathos, though this merit has sometimes been denied her, by those who have not sufficiently entered into the feelings and situation of her characters; in the purity and ease of her immaculate style; and in that predominating spirit of perfect good taste, and of elegance and refinement of mind, which appears in all her writings; in every one of these excellencies, she has no superior, and in their union with each other, she has no equal. There is nothing, which, in the combination of these excellencies, approaches to an equality with her writings;

and by the uniform employment of her rare talents to afford gratification to some of our best feelings, and to recommend and strengthen some of our best habits of action, she has conferred obligations upon the world, which entitle her to a reputation as enviable, perhaps, as that of any writer in English literature.

Though we have suffered ourselves to wander so far, yet we must return once more to the address of Professor Frisbie, to give another paragraph from the last head, and the very fine conclusion of the whole discourse.

'The incorporating of religion with morality, we mention, in the last place, as a means of practical influence. Those we have hitherto noticed, have a more particular reference to the higher and intellectual classes; but this extends to every order in society. It is not the fountain, which plays only in the gardens of the palace, but the rain of heaven, which descends alike upon the enclosures of the rich and the poor, and refreshes the meanest shrub, no less than the fairest flower. The sages of antiquity seem to have believed, that morality had nothing to do with religion; and Christians of the middle ages, that religion had nothing to do with morality; but, at the present day, we acknowledge how intimate and important is their connexion. It is not views of moral fitness, by which the minds of men are at first to be affected, but by connecting their duties with the feelings and motives, the

hopes and fears of Christianity. Both are necessary, tl
latter to prompt and invigorate virtue, the former to gi
it the beauty of knowledge and taste. It is heat, th
causes the germ to spring and flourish in the heart; b
it is light, that imparts verdure to its foliage, and their hu
to its flowers.

'Thus I have spoken, not as I could have wished, b
as I was able, of the necessity, the objects, and influen
of the studies of the moralist. I am aware of obje
tions to much that I have said, which I have omitted
notice, not because they were unimportant, but from wa
of time for their discussion. The idea of perfectibili
has been considered as the dream of the visionary; b
it does not follow, that because every thing is not to l
hoped, therefore nothing is to be attempted. Man h
certainly capacities of improvement, and he can feel
moral influence; his progress may be fluctuating a
slow; but, from the application of judicious and unrem
ting efforts, will it not be certain? Commencing wi
those, who labor to unfold the principles and ends
moral action, may it not be expected to descend, as v
have said, through the higher and more intellectual class
of society, till it reaches and purifies and ennobles th
great mass of mankind in the humblest walks of life;
the blood, flowing from the heart and distributed throug
the larger arteries, finds its way at length into the capi
lary and minuter vessels, where it is incorporated with th
very substance of the body, giving health and vigor an
beauty. Let us then close, by accommodating to o
subject the words of Quintilian concerning eloquenc

'Nam est certe aliquid consummata virtus;* neque ad eam pervenire natura humani ingenii prohibet; quod si non contingat, altius tamen ibunt, qui ad summa nitentur.'

The views exhibited in the last paragraph are such as the philosopher and the Christian delight to contemplate; and in this country, there is particular reason that they should engage and fix our attention. In this country, mankind seem to be subjected to an experiment, to determine their power of improvement, instituted under circumstances incomparably more favorable than ever before existed. No people ever entered the high way to honor with such encouragements and advantages. We are full of youthful freshness and vigor. We are free from any of those institutions transmitted to us from past ages, by which other nations are enthralled, and held back, and allied to the ignorance and vices of their progenitors. The mind is not with us crippled and deformed by prejudices, wound round it from its birth to mould it to some established fashion. We have none of those privileged orders, which are so apt to become stagnant pools of corruption, diffusing moral infection through a people. We acknowledge no claims to superiority, but those which nature has sanc-

* Eloquentia.

tioned, or which are the necessary result of civil society. No adventitious circumstances can supply the want of those qualities that are justly entitled to respect; nor give preeminence and power to one, who, without them, would not be tolerated in the common intercourse of life. We have no established church to oppress and bear down the truth, to hold out a lure in its emoluments, and in the manner in which these are disposed of, for some men to assume the character of christian ministers, who are infamously disqualified for the office; and to weaken the moral principle of its best members, by leading them to miserable subterfuges and sophistry, in order to justify a profession of assent to doctrines which they do not believe. In civil liberty and privileges; and in religious liberty and privileges, so far as the latter depend on the laws, we have nothing more to ask or to wish for; we are favored beyond all example; almost beyond any previous imagination of what might possibly be attained. There exists in this country a facility in acquiring the means of subsistence, which is elsewhere unknown. Honest industry will secure to a man, and to his family, all the necessaries, and many of the conveniences and luxuries of life. The food of the mind is procured with as much ease as that of the body. In many, we believe most of our

states, all the provision which can reasonably be desired, has been made, and has been made successfully, for affording to the great body of the people the rudiments of useful learning. The prevailing humanity of our national character appears in that merciful code of penal laws, which has been adopted throughout a great part of our country; to which there is no parallel in other nations. We are in a great measure free from that corruption of manners which has spread itself over Europe. No where is there more domestic virtue and domestic happiness. The standard of morals is very high with us; and a sense of the obligations of religion and morality is diffused among all classes. This is said generally of course; as all such assertions respecting national character must be made. We do not estimate that of England from the miners of Cornwall, or from the population of her manufacturing towns. We are, to give our general character, a religious and moral people. Such is our present state; and when we look back upon our history, there is little, comparatively speaking, at which we need blush, and very much by which we may justly regard ourselves as honorably distinguished.

If now we are told that other nations excel us in the arts of refinement and luxury, it is not worth





while for us to plead our youth or our poverty; we may answer with the feeling of the Roman poet;

> 'Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra;
> Credo equidem.'

There is no nation which has been outraged with such profligate calumny; and there never was a people, who seemed less disposed to form a correct estimate of their privileges, their advantages and their distinctions. Our hearts have been too cold, when reminded, that *this is our own, our native land;* and the attachment, of which we have defrauded our own country, we have given somewhat too lavishly to others. This is the main fault in our national character. It is time for us to be a little more remiss in our admiration of what is foreign, and to learn to respect ourselves. It is time for us to learn to think of ourselves more justly. In looking so much abroad for models and precedents, there is danger that we may receive from other nations some of the hereditary mischiefs by which they are oppressed, some of the decrepit prejudices to whose authority they still submit, and some of the corruptions of age by which they are disgraced and made miserable.

It is not here the place to speak of those means by which our moral and intellectual condition may be still further improved; but the character of the address we have been considering, and the train of thought it developes, naturally lead us to mention one of them. It is the diffusion of correct tastes, sentiments, and opinions, by the writings of literary men and scholars. Hitherto the peculiar circumstances and exigencies of our country have almost imperiously directed the talents of our eminent men to other occupations, or called them off to higher duties, than those of literature. When asked, therefore, why we have hitherto done so little in the department of letters, we will answer, in the first place, that we have done something, and that our just claims have not been asserted by ourselves, nor allowed by others; and we will go on to reply, that the period is not very distant,—that the memory of an individual not very aged may reach back to the time, when we were, as Mr. Burke described us, 'a people but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood;' that before that time, little *literary* labor was to be expected from the poor and hardy adventurers into an unknown land; surrounded by savage enemies; holding the plough with one hand and the musket in the other; and that since that time, we have been vindicating our

present rank among nations, through the agony of a revolution, and have been organizing ourselves into an empire. But the period has arrived when we must have a literature of our own. This cannot now be regarded as an ornament with which we may dispense, incurring in consequence only a little national disgrace; it must be considered as the safeguard of our best principles, habits, and feelings. It should be made an object of public and of individual interest. There is no deficiency of talents in our country; its enemies have ceased to make this reproach; and literary exertion, therefore, will be in proportion to its encouragement. There will be men of letters enough, when the country is ready to afford them honor and reward. The one must be provided for them; and their claim to the other must be recognized and asserted; and there must be a general feeling, that our national reputation is implicated in the reputation of our national literature. In this too, as in other things, we are in some danger from an indiscriminate admiration of what we may see in older countries. There is little reason to reform our plans of education to bring them, in all respects, to a nearer conformity to theirs. It is not worth while for us to adopt from them traditionary usages, which ought long since to have become obsolete; and from which it would be hap-

py for them if they could deliver themselves. Our plans of education are, generally speaking, suited to our necessities. They are not adapted to overburden the mind with unprofitable learning; but they are adapted to effect what ought to be the great purpose of education, to call forth, exercise and strengthen the different faculties of the mind. Mere scholars, mere literary artisans, are but an inferior class in the republic of letters; and certainly not that, which we have most occasion for. It is quite as well, to say the least, that our manufactories of lexicons and editions of the classics should be at Halle and Göttingen, as that our manufactories of hardware and of woollen goods should be at Birmingham and Leeds. There is even less inconvenience in the former state of things than in the latter. The literature which we want is effective, practical, useful literature, the literature of the intellect and the heart. The men, whom we particularly need, are those, who may guide and form public opinion and sentiment in matters of taste, in morals, in politics, and in religion; men, who will think and write like the author of the address, which we have been reviewing. We want also those who may instruct us through the medium of our own history, and transmit it to posterity in the form in which it ought to be preserved; those who may de-

light us with native works of imagination and genius; and those who may extend the bounds of natural science by exploring the riches of our own country. But we do not wish merely for the encouragement of men of letters who are particularly adapted to our necessities and circumstances. We ought to rejoice in every display of intellectual superiority amongst us. We ought to feel it an honor to our country and to our native state, that it can boast of a mathematician (it is unnecessary to name him) who rivals the first in Europe. We ought not to be satisfied or inactive, till our country is contributing its full proportion to the treasury of the intellectual wealth of mankind.

Never, in all past ages, did a prospect so glorious rise to the view of any nation, as that which is disclosed to our own. Before some of those who may read what we are now writing, shall taste of death, fifty or sixty millions of men will have poured themselves over our country, carrying civilization and the arts to the extreme corner, where the last of our lakes meets the Mississippi; and making the wilderness disappear before them, and ascending and passing the Rocky Mountains, where the Missouri has its source. The character and condition of this immense multitude depend upon nothing so much as upon the principles and

feelings, which may be transmitted to them from the present generation. We ought to acknowledge the debt which is due to our posterity; and to feel that there is no responsibility more solemn, than that of those, who may in any considerable degree affect the destinies of such a people.

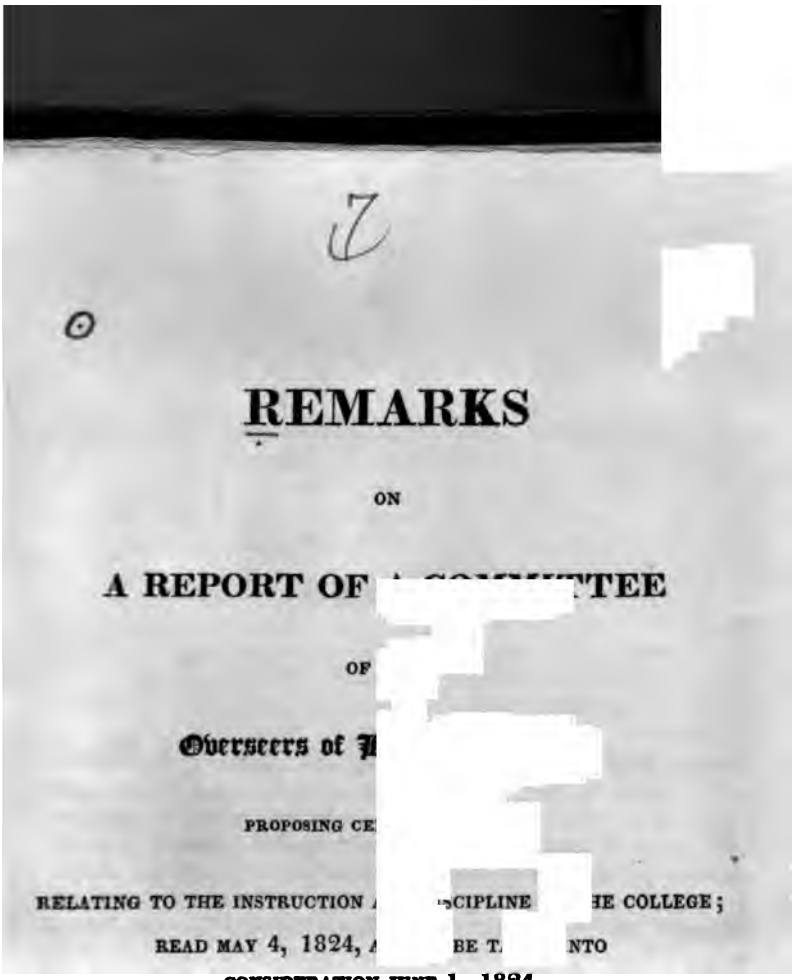












# REMARKS

ON

## A REPORT OF A COMMITTEE

OF

## Overseers of H

PROPOSING CE

RELATING TO THE INSTRUCTION A CIPLINE E COLLEGE;

READ MAY 4, 1824, A BE T NTO

CONSIDERATION JUNE 1, 1824.

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BY ONE, LATELY A MEMBER

OF THE IMMEDIATE GOVERNMENT OF THE COLLEGE.


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Andrews Norton

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CAMBRIDGE:

PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS,

BY HILLIARD AND METCALF.

1824.



# REMARKS.

Having received through the post-office a printed copy of the Report mentioned in the title-page, I shall make it the subject of a few remarks. My connexion with the College, though intimate, is such, that its adoption would in no way affect me through any merely personal interest or private feeling. I am not exposed, therefore, to the imputation of any improper motive, and consequently, not under the restraint from feelings of delicacy, which may, in the present stage of the business, prevent the officers of the Immediate Government (I mean the resident officers of instruction and discipline constituting the body so called) from publicly expressing those objections which they must entertain. My motive for writing is a deep conviction that some of the leading changes proposed in the Report will affect the interests of the College essentially and most injuriously. This motive would be sufficient to justify any member of the community in taking the same course; and in endeavouring at least to prevent the adoption of these changes, till their necessary effects have been fairly and fully considered.

There are various suggestions contained in the Report, and probably a very considerable part of it, in which I should concur. But I do not undertake to say what might be the opinions of other gentlemen, *practically acquainted with the subject.* It seems to have been a fundamental mistake throughout the transaction of this business, that the officers of the Immediate Government of the College have not been constantly and freely consulted; but on the contrary, that the plan has been devised without any direct consultation on the part of the Committee, with those who are practically acquainted with the subject; who must carry it into execution, if it be ever

executed; and whose judgment, therefore, ought to have been enlisted, and whose feelings strongly interested in its favor. To parts of the plan there appear to be the strongest objections; and to these portions of it, it is to be hoped the attention of the Overseers will be particularly directed.

The first leading feature that may be mentioned, is the giving to the President new powers in relation to the other officers, a "complete visitatorial authority" over them, and a negative upon all their acts and proceedings. The power given to the heads of the proposed new departments, into which the College is to be divided in reference to different branches of study, is liable in its degree to the same objections as the new discretionary power given to the President. The change proposed, in so greatly increasing the authority and influence of the latter officer, appears to proceed from an erroneous view of the causes of the present evils in the state of the College, and to be such as will tend essentially to aggravate these evils.

One of the first things to be done to raise the reputation of the College, is to give the officers of the College, *as such*, a higher standing with the community, to make their offices an object of honorable ambition, to treat them with all the deference and estimation which is due to the most important officers of one of the highest literary institutions of our country; to take every proper means to bring together men of the first talents, the most extensive learning, the most correct morals, the soundest judgment; and when such men are thus collected, to make the best use of their powers, by affording them every facility in employing those powers for the benefit and improvement of the College; by committing the institution, as it were, into their hands; not by degrading them to the rank of mere ministerial officers, and subjecting them to the discretionary government of an individual. There need be no hesitation in saying, that the mode in which the officers of the College have for some time been treated, is, in many respects, the reverse of this course of conduct; and the consequent ill effects upon the institution have been sufficiently apparent. The proposals now made will tend to depress them still further. They are to be submitted, as mere ministerial officers, to the authority of the Overseers, the Corporation, the President, and the heads of departments among themselves. They ought to be responsible only to the public through the Overseers; excepting always their responsibility to their own consciences, their own sense

of honor, their own feeling of reputation, and their own strong interest in the prosperity of the institution. The system of government proposed is foreign from the whole spirit which breathes around us in our republican habits and institutions; and is such as no man of proper feelings would submit to, unless the necessities of a family compelled him to make a choice between different duties, his duty to himself and his duty to those dependent upon him. It is proposed to separate the officers of the College from all the other members of the community, and to erect a little despotism, of which they are to be the subjects. The power given to the President is in its nature arbitrary and irresponsible, dependent merely on his own judgment and will, such as is not exercised by any other individual in the country, and such as I trust in the good providence of God, never will be.

Upon what grounds, I would ask, is it supposed that the President will possess such a decided superiority over his colleagues, in good sense and correct notions of discipline, that his simple negative ought to annul what three or four of their number, or all the heads of the executive boards, may have unanimously decided; and how is it imagined possible to support any discipline in the College, if a student, upon the infliction of a punishment, may appeal from the decision of his immediate governors to another officer, state his case personally to him, and hope from him a reversal of his sentence? If it be said that the power will never be exercised, it is worse than nugatory to grant it. But the first instance in which it is exercised, the authority of the officers whose sentence is reversed, will be prostrated. To make an express provision for the reversal of punishments in the ordinary routine of College government, is to make a provision to destroy the government itself.

"The President," it is proposed, "shall have an independent and *responsible* negative upon all the acts and proceedings of the other Boards and Departments in the University." But what can be meant by the epithet as thus used? To whom will the President be responsible for the exercise of his discretion; or how can any public officer be made responsible *for an exercise of discretion?* Supposing a collision between him and any one of the new bodies of government, in which he is clearly in the wrong, what man, or what body of men is to rejudge the case? Is it said that the appeal will be to public

opinion? One answer is, that by the plan proposed, he is provided with every means of influence which can be given him, derived from rank, power, and patronage, to prejudice public opinion in his favor.

The provision made in the plan under consideration, to secure the faithful performance of the duties of the other officers, by the oversight, or as it is called, the "complete visitatorial power" of the President, seems to imply that he alone can be interested in the prosperity of the institution; and that they are to be regarded as a set of idle day-laborers, who will not do their work faithfully without an overseer. Why is it presumed that the President will have this peculiar interest in the good of the College, not felt by the other officers? Suppose he is deficient in this respect; who is to be the overseer of the President? Or if that be effectually provided for, who are to oversee his overseers? This system of compulsory good behaviour, through the constant action of oversight and visitatorial powers, and the fear of reprimand or heavier punishment, will at last be found to rest on nothing. Somewhere or another, in any system for governing the College, the main reliance must be upon men's consciences, and honor, and faithfulness; upon their strong sense of public duty; upon their deep conviction of the importance of the prosperity of the institution to the best interests of the community; upon their desire of honorable reputation and just esteem; and, in the last place, upon their perception that their own private interests are intimately connected with those of the College. These are the motives through which the resident officers are to be addressed. But the present plan directly appeals to none of these motives but the last. This it presents in its humblest form; and on this it rests as a security for the good behaviour of the officers. By bringing this prominently forward, it tends as far as possible to counteract the operation of all higher and more honorable feelings.

It ought to be *one* primary object to make every officer of the College feel, that his personal reputation is involved in the reputation and prosperity of the institution. But the plan now proposed, following up and aggravating the defects of the bad system which has existed, brings forward the President alone as the representative of the College, to take all the praise if the institution flourish, and with such power, and influence, and standing in society, as to be able most probably to shelter

himself from blame, if it do not; even if its decline be attributable to himself alone. That no gentlemen, such as ought to hold an office in the College, would hereafter accept one, if this form of government were adopted, I am fully persuaded; and I do not hesitate to extend the remark to the office of President. No man having a just sense of what is due to others, would consent to place himself in such a relation to those who ought to be his equals.

There seems, indeed, to be no reason in the nature of a literary institution, or in any considerations derived from a regard to its best interests, to show that the President of a College should be a different officer from the Dean of a Faculty, that he should be any thing more than *primus inter pares*, presiding among his colleagues, but taking his part at the same time in all their duties, particularly in the duty of instruction. That the office of the President of Harvard College is of a different character, is perhaps an evil necessarily connected with other existing evils in the constitution of the College, and which must remain till they are removed. The President of a College should act in all important concerns with his colleagues in the government; and the proper and appropriate duties of his office, in such a case, would demand little more of his time, than corresponding duties would demand of their time. He would preside in meetings at which they would be present. To give him other duties, by making him the arbitrary governor of the institution, is to create his office into an intolerable evil. To leave him without any other than the proper and appropriate duties of his office, is to render it nearly a sinecure, an office for parade only. But this is too showy and expensive an appendage for a literary institution. I do not mean to say, that according to the present constitution of Harvard College, the President is not called upon to perform important duties in which his colleagues have no share. The question is, whether it is desirable that this state of things should continue? But whatever answer may be given to this question, it will not affect the force of the preceding considerations; and a more proper time may occur for its discussion.

I shall now remark upon the plan for six different governments, if I have counted rightly, to administer the discipline of the College. Strict uniformity of discipline is a fundamental requisite to the good government of the College, but nothing could easily be devised more adapted to prevent the attain-

ment of this object, than the breaking up of the College government into six distinct governments. It is impossible that they should exercise the discipline of the College upon the same principles and with the same feelings. The officers now residing within the College buildings have frequent communications with each other for mutual advice and assistance, and for the purpose of preserving uniformity of discipline. This is proper, and is all that is necessary, beside the general meetings of the government.

The plan now proposed, by taking away from individual officers the power of inflicting any punishment; by rendering a meeting of three officers necessary to inflict the most trifling; and by subjecting their decision to the reversal of the President, would tend effectually to destroy the authority and respectability of all the other officers in the eyes of the students. When to this we add the delay which must often take place in the infliction of punishment, keeping up, while it continues, a state of irritation among those who are expecting it, and among their friends; the necessary want of uniformity, before adverted to, in the manner in which discipline will be administered by five or six different bodies, sometimes even while acting upon offences of the same character, committed at the same time; the consequent occasion which will take place for the President to interpose his power to reverse, or to modify and equalize, their sentences; the triumph which will follow of a portion of the students over those governors whose sentence is reversed or softened, and the disagreement which will be produced among the governors themselves; when all these things are considered, I believe the plan now proposed will strike every one, who has learned any thing from personal experience in administering the discipline of the College, as being in effect rather a plan for producing insubordination and anarchy, than a plan of government.

Passing over the division of the instructers into departments, which seems a measure of very doubtful expediency, it may now be asked what sufficient reason there is for increasing the number and length of the recitations. Three recitations in a day, beside the other college exercises, are to be attended by every student; and they are to be longer, it is said, and '*more searching* than at present.' It is intended, therefore, that they shall be in great part mere examinations, mere modes of determining whether a student has

properly occupied his time. So far as they are intended to answer this end, it may be made a question whether, instead of increasing their number and length, they do not already occupy too much of the time of the students. In regard to those students who are, or who *may be*, acted upon by higher motives, to those who do not require, or who require but in a small degree, this compulsory process for producing diligence, such a supervision over every two or three hours to be spent in study, such frequent calls to be examined and to be present at a long examination of others, will be not merely irksome; they will be a useless consumption of a large portion of their time. As far as these exercises are intended to afford an opportunity to the teacher for oral instruction, the frequency and length proposed seem wholly unnecessary.

In the remainder of the report there are many proposed regulations which may be approved, and some which seem objectionable. Among the latter may be particularly mentioned, the proposal that every student's room should be visited by an officer at nine o'clock in the evening. As a large portion of the students are scattered about in rooms in different dwellinghouses in the town, at the distance of at least half a mile from each other; the proposal seems hardly practicable. If the visitation should be confined to the rooms in the college buildings, its principal effect would be to lead those inclined to irregularity, to take rooms in the town. But it seems objectionable on other grounds. Such kind of inspection degrades the officers. It takes from them that influence with the students which is of more importance, as regards the true objects to be aimed at in the discipline of the College, than the enforcing of any amount of rules of such a character. It is treating the whole body of students as suspected persons; and tends to produce irritation and reaction on their part, and generally a state of feeling unfavorable to the operation of those motives, on which the main reliance must be placed as a security for their good conduct.

Generally speaking, in the plan proposed, the security for the good conduct of the students, (much as in the case of the officers,) is made to rest principally upon constant supervision and coercive discipline, with little reference to higher motives, and little attempt to devise means for bringing them into operation. In this respect the plan seems to be essentially defective, and to present only a partial system, which operating alone would be found not merely inadequate to the





end proposed; but more likely, it is to be feared, to produce an opposite result, than that which is intended.

The plan, now under consideration, taken as a whole, does not seem to afford any settled and distinct conception of the character which it is proposed to give to the College. Is it to be a University? One would think that this should be gradually aimed at. Yet such frequent recitations as are proposed are not common in any literary institution, which approaches that character. The circumstances likewise in which all the resident instructers are to be placed, and the duties imposed upon them, are such, as must hereafter prevent their stations from being filled by such men as ought to hold the offices of a University, in order to give it any respectability. Is the college then to be degraded to the rank of a high school? What reason in that case can there be for deferring the admission of students till the age of sixteen? How is such a purpose consistent with the proposal on which the report is grounded, that of giving a more thorough education, and leading young men to higher attainments, that of approximating the standard of learning in the College somewhat nearer to the standard of similar institutions in other countries? How is it consistent with the proposal for the admission and instruction of students, who may not wish for a degree, who must in some measure be dispensed from submitting to the strict government proposed over other students, and who, in consequence, would soon, it is probable, amount to a very considerable proportion of the whole number? Why, if such an institution only be intended, should we hereafter wish to increase the means of instruction at Cambridge, since those already existing there are far more than sufficient for the purposes of a high school?

No one, I trust, in consequence of the preceding remarks upon what seem to me the defects of the plan under consideration, will charge me with the foolish vanity of arrogating any superiority of judgment to the gentlemen by whom it has been reported. I have only one advantage which they do not possess. I have been for nearly fifteen years intimately connected with the college; and led, as every one so circumstanced must be, to think and observe much upon the causes which may affect its prosperity or its decline. It is not strange, therefore, if I should perceive the bearing and necessary effects of some proposals, though their consequences may escape the observation of wiser men, without the same

experience, and whose thoughts have not been long directed to the subject. For the talents and integrity of some of the gentlemen who compose the Committee, gentlemen whom I may call my friends, I have in common with the rest of the community, the highest respect. With others of the Committee, I have not the honour of any personal acquaintance; but I have no doubt that they have acted according to their best judgment upon the information, which they possessed, and so far as they were able to give their time to the subject.

But if the plan brought forward be really so defective and objectionable, what other, it may be asked, is to be proposed in its stead. If my views coincided with those expressed in the commencement of the report respecting the present state of the College, I should without hesitation answer, *None*. If the College be in so prosperous a state as is there described, it would seem to be a most hazardous and rash experiment to make any important changes. It would be like giving powerful medicine to a man in health. The old rule, not however exactly applicable to the present subject, is *experimentum in corpore vili*. But my views of the condition of the College, I confess, are different, and such as lead to the conclusion, that important changes are necessary to secure its prosperity and usefulness. The present, however, seems not a proper occasion to enter into any details, or to offer any particular proposals, and I shall, therefore, conclude with only a few general remarks upon the subject.

If important changes are to be introduced, they should rest on a broad and deep foundation; they should be made with clear and comprehensive views of what are, or what ought to be, the general purpose and character of the institution; they should be parts of one great system, well understood beforehand; these parts should be properly adjusted to each other; and the plan introduced should contain in itself principles which will give it perpetuity, and afford at the same time the means of constant improvement and growth. In devising such a plan, a great variety of important considerations must be attended to; and many things followed out into their practical details and bearings. Partial measures, which under certain circumstances might be beneficial, may be merely injurious, if not accommodated to the existing state of things, or to the general system proposed. No error is more likely to be prejudicial than a rash adoption of modes of education which have been found to succeed elsewhere, without regard

to the peculiar circumstances of the institution in which they are copied. No reasoning will probably be more deceptive and mischievous, than reasoning from imperfect analogies, in which essential circumstances affecting the character of different institutions, or in which the habits, manners, state of society, and literary wants of different countries are not sufficiently considered. The adoption of important changes in the College, without the general views before spoken of, will tend only to throw the whole system into confusion, and to increase the evils which now exist. The College is a great public concern, through which the literature, morals, reputation, and happiness of our whole nation may be affected. Very much, it is believed, may be done to raise its character, and improve its present condition. But it is not to be approached rashly, or made the subject of uncertain experiments. Whatever is now done should be done with wide views, on a comprehensive plan. To this end, much examination, much thought, much deliberation, and much discussion are necessary. Those practically acquainted with its concerns, and having the strongest private interest in its prosperity, seem obviously pointed out, by these circumstances, as among the first to be consulted; but assistance should at the same time be derived from many others, whose knowledge and judgment qualify them to afford it. The plan finally settled should be supported by the approbation of those who are to execute it, and of the well informed throughout the community. If less than what has been proposed be done, if an imperfect plan be adopted, unsupported by the judgment of the resident officers, or of the community at large, the consequence, we may well fear, will be the deep, perhaps irremediable, injury of the College.





# PROFESSOR NORTON'S

# Speech.



# SPEECH

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE OVERSEERS OF HARVARD COLLEGE,

FEBRUARY 3, 1825,

IN BEHALF OF

THE RESIDENT INSTRUCTERS OF THE COLLEGE.

WITH AN

**INTRODUCTION.**

BY ANDREWS NORTON.

BOSTON.
PUBLISHED BY CUMMINGS, HILLIARD, & CO.
University Press—Hilliard & Metcalf.
1825.



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# INTRODUCTION.

The principles maintained in the following speech seem to me important, not merely to the prosperity of the college at Cambridge, but to that of all similar literary institutions in our country. The resident instructers of a college are its proper representatives. No other body should intervene between them and the public, to take from them this character. They, and they alone, should stand forward before the community, as accountable for the state of the institution. All the powers, therefore, which properly accompany such responsibility, should be fully and explicitly given them. They should be intrusted, in the first instance, with the government of the institution, considered as a literary establishment; under the supervision and ultimate control of the community, for the benefit of which it is intended, and to which, in the nature of things, it belongs. This supervision and control, the community must of course exercise through its representatives; and in regard to the college at Cambridge, the Overseers are a body so constituted, as to be proper representatives of the community. The resident instructers, as immediate governors of a college, and the public, for which they labor, under whose direction they should be, and to which they should be responsible, are the only two parties properly concerned in the management of such an institution.





The government of the college at Cambridge has, however, been, for some time past, conformed to a very different principle. The institution has been almost entirely under the control of the Corporation, a body, which has been composed of the President of the college, and six non-resident members; and which perpetuates itself, by filling its own vacancies. The Corporation originate all laws, appoint to all offices, confer degrees, and have the disposal of the funds of the college. Their more important measures are subject to the approval or rejection of the Overseers. But the power of the latter body has lain, till within a short period, almost dormant, and its proceedings have been little more than matters of form. The college, therefore, has, in fact, been in the hands of a small number of gentlemen; instead of being under the control of the community, to which it belongs, and the immediate government of its resident officers, who are the persons most concerned in its prosperity.

The Overseers consist of the Governor of the State, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the college, the members of the Council and of the Senate, all *ex officiis*, and of twenty permanent members, namely, ten laymen and ten clergymen, chosen from the community at large. Beside the Corporation and Overseers, there is a third body, called the Immediate Government, composed of the President of the college, of most of the resident instructers, and of the librarian. Four resident instructers, on account of the character of their offices, or from some other particular considerations, are not members. The duties of the members of this body, collectively and individually, are simply to carry into effect the laws of the Corporation respecting instruction and discipline. It is of the '*resident instructers*,' who are members of the Immediate Government, that I mean particularly to speak, when I discuss the reasonableness of enlarging their authority, and it may be

proper to observe, that I am not myself of the number. Under the same term, I would also include the librarian.

Great evils having resulted, as was believed, from the existing distribution of powers, the resident instructers were desirous of effecting some change, by which the government of the college might be placed on a better foundation. Upon examining the subject, they conceived that an essential departure had gradually taken place from the intention of the charter. They believed the fact to be established, that residence was originally a qualification for fellowship in the college, and that it was intended that the Corporation should be composed, together with the President, and Treasurer, of five fellows, that is, of five other *resident* members. Having these views, they submitted to the Corporation a paper, containing "statements and considerations, relative to *the mode, in which, according to the charter of the institution, the corporation of the same ought to be constituted.*" The Corporation declined acting upon this memorial; and in May of the last year, the same paper was laid by the memorialists before the Overseers. During the last month (February) the Overseers granted a hearing to the memorialists before their body; upon which occasion Professor Everett and myself were heard in their behalf.

In respect to the paper in question, it should be observed, that the memorialists did not intend to urge a legal claim for any of their number to be elected members of the Corporation; nor even to maintain, that residence was, *at the present day, a necessary legal qualification* for holding a seat as a member of the Corporation. Many propositions may be sufficiently established by moral evidence, which do not admit of legal proof; and while the intention of the framers of the charter was, as the memorialists conceived, fully shown by evidence of the former kind, they were not qualified to decide, whether this evidence was of a nature to be received as legal proof. They were not qualified to decide whether,



# PROFESSOR NORTON'S

# Speech.

1825

Ayliffe,* it appears that the fellows of these colleges are bound by statute to residence, under certain conditions having no bearing upon the general question. After a pretty extensive examination of the subject, it appears from a great variety of incidental evidence, that the same is the case in the English colleges generally.† No evidence to the contrary has been discovered. The residence of the fellows of a college is, indeed, implied in the essential character of a college as an incorporated body; since we are told, that 'a college, properly speaking, *(simplex collegium)* is, according to the civilians, the fourth species of corporation, and is so called because many persons of the same body or community do cohabit therein; and as our books say, *in eodem simul colliguntur*,' (that is, *are collected together in the same place*;) and herein, it is remarked, the word differs from '*Body* or *Corporation* used as a *generical* term.'‡ The statutes of the English colleges requiring the residence of fellows have, it is true, like a great proportion of their other statutes, become obsolete; and the non-residence of fellows is, at the present day, common. But this is a comparatively modern departure from the intention of those institutions. Residence was the original condition of holding a fellowship, implied in the very character and purpose of the foundation. Non-residence is a matter of permission or dispensation. That it has, since the commencement

* Ayliffe's Ancient and Present State of the University of Oxford. Vol. ii. p. 51.

† The following passage will explain why the statutes themselves cannot be expressly quoted:—'With respect to the statutes of particular colleges, it is not easy to gain an accurate acquaintance with them. There are seldom above two copies of them, and these are kept in close custody, except on two or three days in a year, when they are read, for the most part in a rapid and incorrect manner, in the college chapels.' *Knox on Liberal Education*, vol. ii. p. 173. *Lond.* 1785.

‡ Ayliffe's Oxford, vol. ii. p. 2.

of the last century, become frequent as respects the English colleges, has been urged as an analogy in favor of the non-resident members of the Corporation of Harvard College, to prove that, though non-resident, they may still, conformably to the charter, be qualified to be its governors. But the analogy entirely fails, because the non-resident fellows of an English college, instead of having the control of the institution, take no part whatever in its government.

III. But if the general meaning of the word, at the time when it was used in the charter, as implying residence, were doubtful; its meaning as regards Harvard College, which is the point in question, would be determined by the ancient form of the induction of a fellow, in use before the granting of the charter; which supposes, that a fellow must be resident; as appears from its language, which limits his obligations, by the clause, 'so long as you shall here reside;' from the duty of instruction, or at least the liability to this duty, which it imposes; and from the promise which it contains of a stipend from the revenues of the college.*

IV. What has been stated is further confirmed by the language of various acts of the General Court of the Province, and donations of individuals, for 'the maintenance of the President and Fellows' of the college, principally within a few years subsequent to the granting of the charter. There can be no question, that the fellows, whose maintenance is thus provided for, were, a part or all of them, resident instructers; and that no persons not resident were intended.

V. The five first fellows, members of the Corporation, are named in the charter. They were all of them young men, not particularly distinguished. They were, it is believed, all resident at Cambridge, when selected to be so named. That this was the case with three of their number, is admitted. That the other two, likewise, had been resident during a con-

* See the form of induction at length in the memorial, p. 4.

siderable length of time which approached close to the period when the charter was given, and that they had been, actually and in name, fellows of the college, are facts not denied. But in the absence of clear historical data, there has been an attempt to cast a doubt upon their residence at the precise time last mentioned. But the question seems to be decided by the consideration, that no other reason can be assigned for the naming of these five young men as members of the Corporation, except that they possessed that single qualification, which others more able, more distinguished, and of far more influence in the community, did not possess, the qualification of residence.

VI. The language of the charter is, that "the college in Cambridge shall be a corporation, consisting of seven persons." The word, *college*, is here used in its primary sense, to denote a number of persons associated together for some common purpose. This college, these individuals, are by the charter constituted a Corporation. But the college, in the sense just explained, is recognised by the charter only as being, and as to be, in Cambridge. Conformably to the charter, it is in Cambridge that those seven persons, forming the Corporation, ought to be found. This, so far from being a forced sense of the words, as has been said, is the only sense which the words admit. But if the meaning were doubtful, that which has been stated would be proved true by the analogy of the English colleges; in regard to which, it was never imagined that the corporation, having the government of the college (in the more extensive sense of that word), could reside in any other place, than where the college buildings are situated, and the work of instruction carried on. Still more, the word, *college*, was used in the charter not merely in what is its primary sense; but the nature of the instrument admits no doubt, that it was used in its technical sense, before explained, namely, as denoting a corporation, the members of which are collected

together in the same place. But if this be so, the intention of the charter respecting the residence of members of the Corporation is determined.

VII. It cannot be believed, that it was the intention of the framers of the charter, that in any case, the *whole* college, constituting the Corporation, or, in more familiar language, *all* the governors of the college, might be non-resident. Such a form of government would have been entirely without precedent; while, on the contrary, according to what is conceived to be the only proper mode of understanding the charter, its framers designed, as we should naturally suppose, to conform to the mode of government established in the English colleges, with which they were well acquainted. In the exercise of common good sense, they could never have intended, that, as regards residence, the only qualification of fellows of the college and members of the Corporation, should be inhabitance in some part of the province, though this has been maintained. If all the members of the Corporation were non-resident, it does not appear possible, that they should exercise their powers in any proper manner. At present, all except one are non-resident; but the necessity of the residence of one is admitted. But unless all the members of the Corporation are bound to residence by the charter, no one of them is bound to residence. If the fellows are not bound to residence, still less is the Treasurer or President; and strange as it may appear at the present day, we find among other departures from the intention of the charter, which began to occur at an early period, the case of a non-resident President. The office of President was held by the Rev. Increase Mather, while at the same time he was a clergyman in Boston, till the abuse was corrected in 1701, by the interposition of the General Court.* It would have been

* It is thus that this fact is stated by his son, Cotton Mather: "There were some Disaffected Men who for some reasons [God *knows what they*

used, was intended a resident member of the college, deriving maintenance from its revenues.

The other objection supposes, that Samuel Danforth, one of the fellows named in the charter, ceased, soon after it was given, to be resident, but still continued to be a fellow. That he ceased to be resident, is agreed. Whether or not he continued to be a fellow, is disputed. But admitting that he did so, the fact seems to be of no force to explain or set aside the intent of the charter. The statutes of the English colleges, which have been examined, impose on fellows the obligation of residence; yet this obligation is very commonly dispensed with. There is no proof, that if Danforth continued nominally a fellow, he took any part in the government of the college as such, any more than the non-resident fellows of an English college. The fact of his remaining nominally a fellow, if it could be established, might be easily explained by the probable supposition, that when he ceased to be resident, there were, at this early period, not more than four resident fellows remaining; but the charter requiring the number of five fellows in the Corporation, and there being no one to fill his seat, if vacated, he still nominally retained it. The case, if it occurred, is to be considered not as an explanation of the charter, the meaning of which is proved by other evidence; but merely as a dispensation from the established rule, occasioned by accidental circumstances. In order to bring the case of Danforth to have any bearing upon that of the present non-resident members of the Corporation, positive proof is required not merely that he remained nominally a fellow; but, still more, positive proof, which no one has attempted to adduce, that he continued to take a share in the government of the college, as a member of the Corporation.

Relying, therefore, upon arguments such as have been stated, and upon other subsidiary proofs, the memorialists believed that it was the intention of the charter, that the Corpo-

ration should be composed of resident officers of the college. They believed at the same time, that the good of the college required a fundamental change in the mode of its government; and they thought, that bringing into view the intention of the charter, would be the least invidious mode of suggesting the propriety of such a change. Whether, upon the supposition, that there was no legal obligation to restore the government of the college to the form intended by the charter; this form, in itself considered, were on the whole preferable, was a question, which they regarded as left open for discussion. For myself, I am not confident, that it would be the best mode of reducing to practice the principles, which it has been my object to maintain. I have had no call to consider the subject with sufficient attention; nor have I been assisted in forming a judgment, by any opposing statements or arguments, which seemed to me to have much bearing upon the question, when properly understood; and I am unwilling to add another to the hasty opinions, which have been made up on partial knowledge and imperfect views.

In the following speech, the principle is maintained, that so far as the college is to be regarded under the aspect of a literary institution, its resident instructers should, in the first instance, be its governors. The most important conclusion from this general principle is, that they should have the power of originating all laws respecting its instruction and discipline. But another important consequence flowing from it, is, that they should have the power of nominating to all offices of instruction and discipline. The principle stated will be imperfectly applied, unless it be followed out to this result. I will not here repeat the arguments upon this point, which may be found briefly stated in the subsequent pages; but will add a few remarks. If the resident instructers are to be made responsible, as they ought to be, for the literary and moral character of the institution, they should have the privi-





lege of naming those whom they would choose as their associates, to carry on with them the work of discipline and instruction. Holding the relation which they do to the college, the resident instructers are the proper depositaries of all power, necessary to form the moral and literary character of the institution. No privilege, therefore, which may be exercised by them with as much advantage as by any other body of men, should be taken from them, and given to other individuals. To transfer from them to six non-resident gentlemen any power, which the former are capable of exercising with equal benefit to the college, is to degrade their offices, and to lay all those who may hold them under a standing imputation of incapacity. The resident instructers have a personal and peculiar concern in the prosperity of the institution, which, from the nature of the case, cannot be felt by others. They are bound to it, not merely by public duty, but by private interest. The desire of its prosperity and reputation, which in them must be so active a feeling, would always induce them to be very careful in selecting not merely a proper candidate, but the most proper candidate for any office. Their personal interest in making the college as distinguished and useful as possible, would act in constant opposition to any improper motive or bias. Operating generally through the whole body, it would serve effectually to counteract any particular influence from individual prejudice, partiality, acquaintance, friendship, connexion, or from any less excusable motive. When the relation between a patron and a candidate for office is such, that the former will be affected neither in his interest nor reputation by the manner in which the latter may perform the duties assigned him; men are very liable to be influenced by other considerations than a mere regard to the superior fitness of the candidate. The door is left open, through which all the evils of patronage enter, those evils which in older countries have been felt

so severely, in the misapplication of public wealth and of public charities, and in the perversion and degradation of their institutions. But on the other hand, when those who have the power of nominating to an office, have themselves a stronger personal interest than any other individuals, that its duties should be properly discharged, there is then every security that the power will be properly exercised.

There is another principle in the government of an institution like the college, intimately connected with that already stated. The resident instructers should be not merely the primary depositaries of the power necessary to its good management; they should receive of the honor which may properly belong to the institution. Its reputation cannot be unappropriated, nor attach itself to the abstract idea of a college; it belongs, in the nature of things, to individuals; and the more clearly and definitely it attaches to certain individuals, the better. But the resident instructers are marked out by every circumstance as the proper representatives of the college; with whose offices all the honor due to the institution ought to be associated. No other body should intervene, as at present, to obscure them from public view; and to take from their offices, the rank and respectability which should be connected with them. But the present representatives of the college are six non-resident gentlemen and one resident officer. They constitute its Corporation. They are its governors. The resident instructers have been called their servants; and the name, perhaps, may express the relation which actually exists between these two bodies; but certainly does not correspond to the state of things which ought to exist. The station of master is one of more honor and dignity than that of servant; but in a literary institution there should be no offices of more honor or dignity, than those given to the literary men who are its instructers. They, indeed, should be the servants of the pub-

lic, but not of any other body of men. An opposite state of things, however, now exists; for the members of the Corporation, as that body is constituted, cannot be considered as representatives of the public.

If the college were without permanent funds; if its instructers had associated themselves together, and depended for their remuneration upon the fees received from their pupils; it would enter no one's imagination, that they would be enabled to manage the institution more prosperously by putting themselves under the government of certain gentlemen, taken from the community at large, to whom they should transfer the whole control of the college; leaving to the judgment of those gentlemen the direction of its studies, the regulation of its modes of instruction and discipline, and the appointment of their future associates. The proposal would be regarded as unworthy of serious discussion. Let us, however, apply the principle to a particular case. If the instructers of the admirable seminary, lately established at Northampton, should, for the purpose of rendering the institution more flourishing, procure the incorporation of a number of gentlemen from the neighbouring towns, to take the control of its studies and discipline off their hands, there would be no difference of opinion respecting the wisdom of such a project. In what respects, then, does the case of the college differ from that of such an institution? It differs in one very important particular alone. Its instructers are supported, in part, by permanent funds provided by the community, or by individuals for the benefit of the community. It belongs to the community, therefore, to see that these funds are not misused. At the same time, a certain amount of salary being secured to a resident instructer, a part of that stimulus to exertion is removed, which would arise merely from a regard to pecuniary emolument, if this depended solely upon the reputation of the

institution, or of the teacher.* It is proper, therefore, that the college should be subject to a special and peculiar supervision and control on the part of the community. If its officers, like those of the school at Northampton, depended for their remuneration, solely upon the success of their own exertions in rendering the institution such, as that pupils might be led to resort to it, there would be as little necessity for the special supervision of the community in the one case, as in the other. As the state of things now is, the government of the college should be under the oversight and control of the public; but the question still recurs, who under such control should be its governors; and upon this question, the difference between the

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* It may be observed, however, that all the stimulus to exertion, from a regard to pecuniary emolument, which it is desirable should exist, might be easily obtained, by fixing at a much lower sum, than at present, the permanent salary of an instructer; and making its increase within certain limits, or indefinitely, depend upon the amount of *tuition money*, received from the students of the college; the *tuition money*, either wholly or in part, being shared among the instructers in proper proportions, conformed to the difference of their permanent salaries. With the plan, however, of allowing to the students a greater choice among various studies, has been connected another proposal, having the same object with that which I have just suggested, namely, that the emolument of each instructer, wholly, or in part, should depend on fees, received from his own particular pupils. To this there are various objections; but a decisive one in my mind is, that it would tend directly to produce competition, jealousy, and ill will among the instructers; and thus, beside other evils, be of essential injury to the college, by preventing all common action among them to promote its good. On the other hand, the plan suggested would give all the instructers a common interest in raising the character of the institution, so as to increase the number of its students. Every instructer would be concerned, that every other should hold a high rank, and perform his duties with faithfulness and ability. I may here add, that if such a plan were adopted, I suppose no one would doubt, that the instructers should have the power of nominating their associates. It would then be a matter of justice to them, that they should have this power. But as regards simply the prosperity of the college, there are now the same reasons, why they should exercise it, as there would be in the case supposed.

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But when we speak of oversight or control, we must recollect, that it should be exercised on a broad and liberal plan; with a prevailing sentiment of generous and proper confidence in the resident instructers; such confidence as ought to be felt in them, if they are qualified for their offices. When we speak of responsibility, we must recollect that their responsibility, in the nature of things, like that of all other men in public office, is to the public alone; and not to a small number of individuals. Nothing could be devised more injurious to the college, than to subject them to the minute, vexatious oversight of one, or of some half-dozen persons, exercising a visitatorial power. What man of honorable feelings would submit to place himself in a situation, in which a few individuals, not his superiors in age, in talents, in morals, nor in any claim upon the respect of society, were to see that he did his duty? No such oversight has been exercised, and none such, I trust, ever will be attempted. The supervision required is that of a numerous, popular body, so constituted as to represent the community; composed, in great part at least, of members elected by the community, and elected from different portions of the state. The Overseers of the college are such a body. But the difficulty, at present, is, that they, the proper representatives of the public, are hardly brought into any connexion with the resident instructers, the proper representatives of the college. They are, and they will be,







the college would be exculpated and vindicated by the representatives of the public. If well founded, the evil would be remedied by their interference. Instead likewise of the present nugatory show of literary examinations into the proficiency of the students, real, effective examinations, like those of the military academy at West Point, might be instituted by the Overseers; and the literary state of the college thus constantly laid open to public inspection.

But it is not merely through this constant inspection for the purpose of correcting evils, that the college might derive advantage from its peculiar connexion with the state. This connexion is a great honor, and might in other respects than those mentioned, be of great benefit. It is most desirable that the community should regard the college as its care. It is most desirable that its instructers should always feel that they are acting in the view of the public, responsible to their fellow citizens and to them alone; and that they are to receive a great part of their reward in public approbation. It is through the Overseers, as representatives of the public, that the instructers may properly be encouraged, animated, and applauded. It would be with very different feelings from what he has at present, that a literary man would perform the duties of his office at Cambridge, if he knew that the college was a constant object of public interest, and a proper object of public regard; that on him and his associates, the public attention was steadily directed; and that his exertions and services would be known and fairly estimated.

In order to render the college, such an institution as it may become, prosperous and useful, as it is capable of being, measures must, in the first place, be taken to secure as its instructers, men of the first talents, the soundest learning, the purest morals, and the deepest sense of religion. To this end, the offices of the resident instructers must be such, that men of the character described will be willing to accept and will-

ing to retain them. They must be offices of dignity and trust; affording to those who hold them, full opportunity of making the best use of their abilities for the good of the institution. In the next place, the instructers thus secured must not be subjected, as mere ministerial officers, to the direction of other individuals, who are in comparison, but remotely connected with the college, and imperfectly acquainted with its interests. The institution will flourish then, and then only, when such men as have been described are made responsible to the public for its prosperity, and have all the power and honor, which should accompany this responsibility.

It may be proper to observe, that I have as little private interest in the topics discussed in what precedes and follows, as any individual in the community. This is known to those who are acquainted with the nature of my connexion with the college. My interest arises from a strong concern for the welfare of an institution, which all must regard as having a most important influence upon the intellectual and moral state of our community; from a conviction, that its present system of government has been essentially injurious; and that by changing this system, its growth in reputation and usefulness might, in the course of a few years, advance with a rapidity, which one would be thought sanguine and extravagant, if he should now predict. With the good sense and habits of free discussion, which prevail among us; if the principles which have been stated be correct, however circumstances may prevent their being acknowledged at present, they will in time be adopted and acted upon. The great point to be gained is to awaken public attention; and to make the community feel the interest which they have in the subject in discussion.

# SPEECH.

May it please your Honor.

My object in appearing before this Reverend and Honorable Board, is to explain the motives and purposes of the memorialists in presenting the paper under consideration; and the circumstances which led them to take the course which they have done. They believe that the fact has been established, that in the first institution of the college, and for a considerable number of years subsequent, certain powers were vested in the resident instructers, as members of the Corporation, which they do not now possess. The exercise of some of these powers by the resident instructers, they regard as essential to the prosperity of the college. But the particular change in the mode of constituting the government of the college, to which the paper in question would seem to lead, is merely one form of introducing that change in the state of the institution which the memorialists deem important. I shall, therefore, endeavour to explain what are the essential features of the change which the present state of things requires, and the grounds upon which this change is considered necessary to the prosperity of the institution. I am confident that the great majority of the gentlemen whom I have the honor to address, have but one feeling in regard to the college—a desire of its prosperity. This must be the desire of every man, who regards the honor and interests of our native state, the memory of our ancestors, and the happiness and virtue of our children. In this feeling, therefore, which alone would have induced me, contrary to all my usual habits of life, to appear in this place, I am secure of your sympathy. I am, I trust, secure of your attention; and that any considerations, which I may present, will be allowed their full weight, even though, from the novelty of the





situation in which I find myself placed, and the short time which has been allowed for preparation, they may be imperfectly stated.

Concerning the whole subject which has been before this Board, relating to the condition and interests of the college, the great body of the community have but a very imperfect and partial degree of information. The course of policy which has been pursued, as is generally known, has been to keep the concerns of the institution as much as possible out of view, and to prevent them from being brought into public discussion. The real state of things is, in many respects, essentially different from what appearances might lead one to suppose or expect. I will venture to say, therefore, that if any gentleman know no more respecting the concerns and interests of the college, than what has appeared and been stated in the course of the discussions respecting this subject, his view must of necessity be exterior, partial, and erroneous. I, therefore, do not despair of being able to open some new views to the gentlemen whom I have the honor to address, which they may agree with me in thinking to deserve attention. From long connexion with the college, and from being personally acquainted with all the late measures, both in and out of the government, which have led to the present discussions, I have had some peculiar opportunities for information. I shall be very open and explicit; for the present occasion requires great openness and explicitness. The memorialists have been brought to a point, where they can defend their own characters, and maintain the best interests of the college, only by a more full and naked exhibition of facts and truths, than has yet been made. At the same time, as I appear in this place merely from public motives, and am not influenced by the slightest feeling of personal ill will toward any individual; so I shall be very careful not to give any individual reasonable cause of offence. I shall be equally solicitous not to give unnecessary pain to any one; and to the latter consideration shall be willing to sacrifice, in some degree, the strength of my statements. Enough, I believe, may still be said to produce every desirable effect. If, however, with all the care which I may use, I should yet be so unfortunate as to give personal offence, I must regard it as a misfortune, which the circumstances of the case have necessarily brought upon me.

In order to place the purposes and conduct of the memorialists in a just point of view, it is necessary, in the first place, to give some account of the course of events, which has immediately led to the present discussions before this Reverend and Honorable Body. It is well known to many, that for a considerable number of years past, great dissatisfaction with the condition of the college has existed in the minds of the resident officers, and others who have had an opportunity for a near view of its real state. In the summer of 1821, that is, about four years and a half since, a paper was drawn up by a highly respectable officer of the institution in the form of a letter to a member of the Corporation, containing a statement of some of the evils which existed, accompanied with proposals of remedy and reform. This communication, taken in connexion with the prevailing dissatisfaction with the state of the college, led the Corporation to direct their attention to the subject. A circular letter addressed to the resident instructers, and to one instructer not resident, (I am uncertain whether to any others,) was accordingly issued by them, dated in September 1821. It filled seven closely written folio pages, and contained a great variety of questions, respecting the discipline, instruction, and morals of the students, to which answers were requested. Replies were given by most of the gentlemen addressed, as soon as practicable, some of them entering into the subject much at length. These replies were referred to a committee of the Corporation; and, that body having apparently by its proceedings pledged itself to undertake a reform, it was confidently expected by some, that important changes would be introduced. Nothing, however, was done except promulgating some regulations respecting the expenses and dress of the students. With this exception, the whole business was suffered to sleep. In the summer of 1823, two years after the subject had been first agitated; when it had become apparent that no effectual measures were to be expected from the Corporation, the only body, which, according to the usages of the college, exercised the power of originating any measure, the feeling of discontent with the existing state of things, which had been in some degree suspended by the hope of improvement, again recovered strength. It was determined by some gentlemen, with the full consent and approbation of those resident officers, who were acquainted with the design,

situation in which I find myself placed, and the short time which has been allowed for preparation, they may be imperfectly stated.

Concerning the whole subject which has been before this Board, relating to the condition and interests of the college, the great body of the community have but a very imperfect and partial degree of information. The course of policy which has been pursued, as is generally known, has been to keep the concerns of the institution as much as possible out of view, and to prevent them from being brought into public discussion. The real state of things is, in many respects, essentially different from what appearances might lead one to suppose or expect. I will venture to say, therefore, that if any gentleman know no more respecting the concerns and interests of the college, than what has appeared and been stated in the course of the discussions respecting this subject, his view must of necessity be exterior, partial, and erroneous. I, therefore, do not despair of being able to open some new views to the gentlemen whom I have the honor to address, which they may agree with me in thinking to deserve attention. From long connexion with the college, and from being personally acquainted with all the late measures, both in and out of the government, which have led to the present discussions, I have had some peculiar opportunities for information. I shall be very open and explicit; for the present occasion requires great openness and explicitness. The memorialists have been brought to a point, where they can defend their own characters, and maintain the best interests of the college, only by a more full and naked exhibition of facts and truths, than has yet been made. At the same time, as I appear in this place merely from public motives, and am not influenced by the slightest feeling of personal ill will toward any individual; so I shall be very careful not to give any individual reasonable cause of offence. I shall be equally solicitous not to give unnecessary pain to any one; and to the latter consideration shall be willing to sacrifice, in some degree, the strength of my statements. Enough, I believe, may still be said to produce every desirable effect. If, however, with all the care which I may use, I should yet be so unfortunate as to give personal offence, I must regard it as a misfortune, which the circumstances of the case have necessarily brought upon me.

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separated from each other, by the intervention of the Corporation, so long as this body, constituted as at present, exercises its present authority. The Corporation has gradually come to be considered as having at once the government and the oversight of the college; and any proper exercise on the part of the Overseers, of the power which their name implies, would almost assume the character of an interference. This must be the case, so long as the resident instructers are considered as ministerial officers, under the direction of the Corporation; for it follows from this, that it is to the latter body, that these officers are accountable. The administration of the college being divided, as at present, between two bodies, the one constituted of its real governors, who legislate for the other body, which is composed of those whose business is merely to execute their laws, there is such a divided reponsibility for the state of the college, that no clear and definite object of supervision presents itself to the Overseers in the regular course of business. Every thing eludes their grasp.

But unite in the resident instructers the powers which have been thus disjoined, and a body of men would exist, to whom the public now naturally look as responsible for the state of the college; and who would then be fully and solely responsible for it. The Overseers would know, at once, where to direct their attention, when any evil or any complaint existed. Having a well defined and practicable duty to perform, there can be no doubt that they would perform it; and that their relation to the college would be very different from what it has been. The general state of the institution might, for instance, once a year, or oftener if occasion should require, be made a subject of discussion. The opinions of gentlemen from different parts of the state, with different views and feelings, might be collected. Complaints might be publicly brought forward. Committees might be appointed to examine whether they were well or ill founded. If without foundation,





the college would be exculpated and vindicated by the representatives of the public. If well founded, the evil would be remedied by their interference. Instead likewise of the present nugatory show of literary examinations into the proficiency of the students, real, effective examinations, like those of the military academy at West Point, might be instituted by the Overseers; and the literary state of the college thus constantly laid open to public inspection.

But it is not merely through this constant inspection for the purpose of correcting evils, that the college might derive advantage from its peculiar connexion with the state. This connexion is a great honor, and might in other respects than those mentioned, be of great benefit. It is most desirable that the community should regard the college as its care. It is most desirable that its instructers should always feel that they are acting in the view of the public, responsible to their fellow citizens and to them alone; and that they are to receive a great part of their reward in public approbation. It is through the Overseers, as representatives of the public, that the instructers may properly be encouraged, animated, and applauded. It would be with very different feelings from what he has at present, that a literary man would perform the duties of his office at Cambridge, if he knew that the college was a constant object of public interest, and a proper object of public regard; that on him and his associates, the public attention was steadily directed; and that his exertions and services would be known and fairly estimated.

In order to render the college, such an institution as it may become, prosperous and useful, as it is capable of being, measures must, in the first place, be taken to secure as its instructers, men of the first talents, the soundest learning, the purest morals, and the deepest sense of religion. To this end, the offices of the resident instructers must be such, that men of the character described will be willing to accept and will-

ing to retain them. They must be offices of dignity and trust; affording to those who hold them, full opportunity of making the best use of their abilities for the good of the institution. In the next place, the instructers thus secured must not be subjected, as mere ministerial officers, to the direction of other individuals, who are in comparison, but remotely connected with the college, and imperfectly acquainted with its interests. The institution will flourish then, and then only, when such men as have been described are made responsible to the public for its prosperity, and have all the power and honor, which should accompany this responsibility.

It may be proper to observe, that I have as little private interest in the topics discussed in what precedes and follows, as any individual in the community. This is known to those who are acquainted with the nature of my connexion with the college. My interest arises from a strong concern for the welfare of an institution, which all must regard as having a most important influence upon the intellectual and moral state of our community; from a conviction, that its present system of government has been essentially injurious; and that by changing this system, its growth in reputation and usefulness might, in the course of a few years, advance with a rapidity, which one would be thought sanguine and extravagant, if he should now predict. With the good sense and habits of free discussion, which prevail among us; if the principles which have been stated be correct, however circumstances may prevent their being acknowledged at present, they will in time be adopted and acted upon. The great point to be gained is to awaken public attention; and to make the community feel the interest which they have in the subject in discussion.



# SPEECH.

May it please your Honor.

My object in appearing before this Reverend and Honorable Board, is to explain the motives and purposes of the memorialists in presenting the paper under consideration; and the circumstances which led them to take the course which they have done. They believe that the fact has been established, that in the first institution of the college, and for a considerable number of years subsequent, certain powers were vested in the resident instructers, as members of the Corporation, which they do not now possess. The exercise of some of these powers by the resident instructers, they regard as essential to the prosperity of the college. But the particular change in the mode of constituting the government of the college, to which the paper in question would seem to lead, is merely one form of introducing that change in the state of the institution which the memorialists deem important. I shall, therefore, endeavour to explain what are the essential features of the change which the present state of things requires, and the grounds upon which this change is considered necessary to the prosperity of the institution. I am confident that the great majority of the gentlemen whom I have the honor to address, have but one feeling in regard to the college—a desire of its prosperity. This must be the desire of every man, who regards the honor and interests of our native state, the memory of our ancestors, and the happiness and virtue of our children. In this feeling, therefore, which alone would have induced me, contrary to all my usual habits of life, to appear in this place, I am secure of your sympathy. I am, I trust, secure of your attention; and that any considerations, which I may present, will be allowed their full weight, even though, from the novelty of the





situation in which I find myself placed, and the short time which has been allowed for preparation, they may be imperfectly stated.

Concerning the whole subject which has been before this Board, relating to the condition and interests of the college, the great body of the community have but a very imperfect and partial degree of information. The course of policy which has been pursued, as is generally known, has been to keep the concerns of the institution as much as possible out of view, and to prevent them from being brought into public discussion. The real state of things is, in many respects, essentially different from what appearances might lead one to suppose or expect. I will venture to say, therefore, that if any gentleman know no more respecting the concerns and interests of the college, than what has appeared and been stated in the course of the discussions respecting this subject, his view must of necessity be exterior, partial, and erroneous. I, therefore, do not despair of being able to open some new views to the gentlemen whom I have the honor to address, which they may agree with me in thinking to deserve attention. From long connexion with the college, and from being personally acquainted with all the late measures, both in and out of the government, which have led to the present discussions, I have had some peculiar opportunities for information. I shall be very open and explicit; for the present occasion requires great openness and explicitness. The memorialists have been brought to a point, where they can defend their own characters, and maintain the best interests of the college, only by a more full and naked exhibition of facts and truths, than has yet been made. At the same time, as I appear in this place merely from public motives, and am not influenced by the slightest feeling of personal ill will toward any individual; so I shall be very careful not to give any individual reasonable cause of offence. I shall be equally solicitous not to give unnecessary pain to any one; and to the latter consideration shall be willing to sacrifice, in some degree, the strength of my statements. Enough, I believe, may still be said to produce every desirable effect. If, however, with all the care which I may use, I should yet be so unfortunate as to give personal offence, I must regard it as a misfortune, which the circumstances of the case have necessarily brought upon me.

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those powers which would not of necessity have been vested in the Overseers, as the controlling authority in the government of the college.

The ground of controversy, then, whatever now remains, is much less than it may originally have appeared. The essential principle for which the resident officers have contended, the essential principle involved in their memorial, may be considered as almost conceded. If this principle had been fully and explicitly recognised by the body whom I have the honour to address, I certainly should not have appeared in this place. But it has not been. On the contrary, a report has been adopted, offered the last year by the committee, of which the Hon. Judge Story was chairman, which is inconsistent with the principle maintained, namely, that the internal management of the college should be committed, in the first instance, to the resident officers.

The question, then, now is, what body should be entrusted with the internal government of the college, considered merely as a literary institution; what body should have the power of originating laws respecting its discipline and instruction; what body should be authorized to bring forward measures of reform and improvement, and should be made responsible for bringing forward all such measures necessary or expedient. The supervision and ultimate control of the institution rest with the Overseers. But they have not hitherto exercised the power of originating particular laws, excepting so far as the adoption of the report to which I have just referred, is a departure from their common practice; and the constitution and proper character of this Honorable Board are such, that no one, I suppose, will deem it possible, that this power should ordinarily be exercised by it. The power is now vested in the Corporation, composed of the President of the college and of six non-resident members. The question is, whether it should not be transferred, in whatever form or mode may be thought most advisable, by your Honorable Body, to the resident instructers. The question is simply this, whether non-resident gentlemen, or resident officers, will be likely to have the most intimate acquaintance with the institution, the best practical judgment in respect to its concerns, the deepest sense of responsibility, and the most constant and active personal interest in promoting its usefulness

and reputation. There is nothing, so far as I can perceive, to be objected to this statement of the question; and I doubt whether the whole case might not be safely left as thus stated. But there is much more that may be said upon the subject; and an argument commonly strikes us with greater force when explained in its details. Unwilling, therefore, as I am, to trespass upon the time of this Honorable Body, I respectfully beg your attention to some considerations relating to this subject.

In bringing forward these considerations, I shall, for the sake of brevity, use the term, *governors of the college*, to denote persons having the power of originating laws for its discipline and instruction, those to whom, considered merely under the aspect of a literary institution, it is, in the first instance, entrusted. I beg that the term may be understood in this limited sense. By whom, then ought the power which I have thus defined to be exercised? Who, in the sense in which the term has been explained, should be the governors of the college? Let us consider what particular qualifications are required.

In order to the proper performance of their most important duties, the governors of the college should, in the first place, be men practically acquainted with its concerns; in the next place, they should be literary men by profession, familiar with the science of education, and able to judge of the relative importance of different branches of study; in the third place, they should be so circumstanced as to be able fully to attend to its concerns; and, lastly, their personal interest and reputation should be evidently and strongly implicated in its prosperity and decline. These important particulars comprehend every peculiar qualification required in the governors of the college.

Now, then, keeping these qualifications in view, there can, in the first place, be no question, that the resident instructers must have, and that no other gentlemen can have, a practical acquaintance with the concerns of the college. Of the importance of such practical acquaintance with a subject, in the management of any other business or institution, no doubt was ever entertained. It has always been regarded as a first requisite, for the want of which nothing can compensate. It is the necessary foundation of good practical judgment, this

being the result of observation and experience; and founded upon the knowledge of a great variety of particular facts, the details and bearings of which are frequently suffered to escape the mind, while only the general result is retained. If it were possible to recollect distinctly all those particular facts, yet universal experience has shown, that it is impossible so to communicate them to another, that he may make use of the knowledge thus acquired, as if it had been the result of his own observation and experience.

The question, then, is whether you will have as governors of the college, gentlemen practically acquainted with its concerns, whose daily occupation they constitute; or gentlemen without practical acquaintance with its concerns, and to whom, from the nature of things, the knowledge which it is desirable they should possess, cannot be communicated. The force of this reasoning may, perhaps, be rendered more striking by considering the impossibility, that the non-resident members of the Corporation should perform the duties now devolved upon that body, in any manner whatever, unless one resident officer, the President, were at the same time a member of that body; unless at least one individual were present with them, practically and personally acquainted with the concerns of the institution; or unless some other regular means were adopted to obtain from the resident officers a constant supply of that information respecting its concerns, which they alone can furnish. We are considering whether the governors of the college should consist of non-resident gentlemen, or of resident officers; and the fact just stated, that if it were not for the association of one resident officer, it would be impracticable for the present non-resident governors to act in any proper manner, at least without constant reference to, and reliance upon, the knowledge and guidance of the resident officers, seems to show decidedly that resident officers have, and that non-resident gentlemen cannot have, the proper qualifications as governors of the college.

The next requisite before mentioned is, that the governors of the college should be literary men by profession, acquainted with the science of education, and able to judge of the relative importance of different branches of learning—men whose studies and occupations, the business of whose lives, have relation to the great purposes of such an institution. Now

the permanent members of the Immediate Government are literary men by profession. It is their business to be acquainted with the science of education; or, in other words, with the proper method of conducting the intellectual and moral discipline of the young. This is a science; and, like other sciences, not to be understood by cursory and partial attention. Among the variety of theories on the subject, the multitude of different plans proposed, the new experiments which are every day making, and the traditionary usages, which are supposed to be recommended by experience, it requires much consideration, and much practical acquaintance with the subject, to judge correctly of the method most proper to be pursued under given circumstances. Great improvements have been made, within a recent period, in the modes of instructing the young, and of forming their characters. With these, the governors of a literary institution should be acquainted; and it is their duty to bring them into use in such an institution. But, at the same time, it is believed, that no error is likely to be more injurious, than a rash adoption of modes of education, which have been found to succeed elsewhere, without regard to the peculiar circumstances of the institution in which they are copied. No reasoning will, probably, be more deceptive and mischievous, than reasoning from imperfect analogies, in which essential circumstances affecting the character of different institutions, or in which the habits, manners, state of society, and literary wants, of different countries, are laid out of view; yet this is, perhaps, the error into which those who have no practical acquaintance with the subject are most likely to fall.

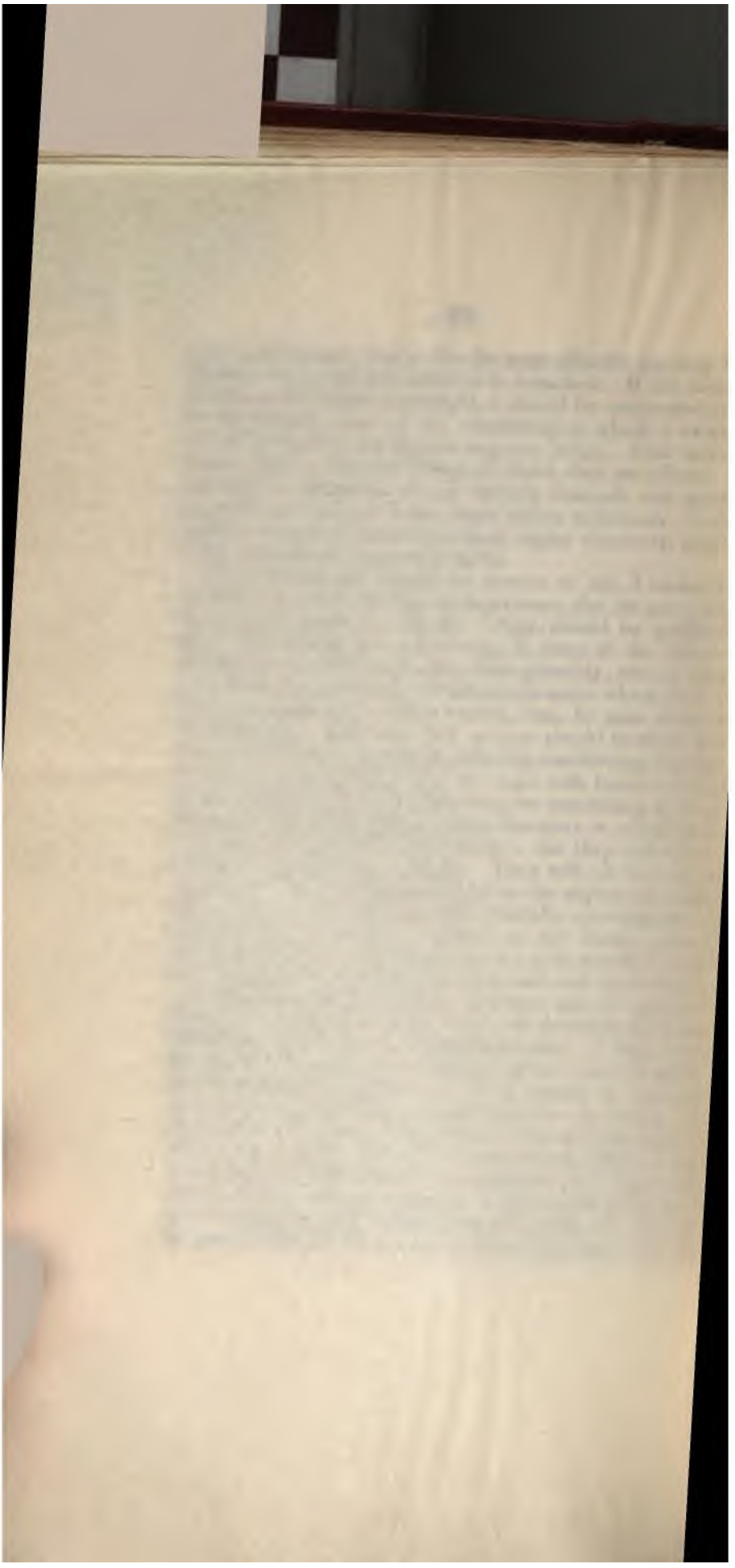
But in the government of a literary institution, much judgment is required, not merely as to the best modes of effecting certain objects, but as to the objects themselves, which it is desirable to effect. The great ultimate purposes in the religious and moral education of the young remain always the same; but in regard to intellectual cultivation, this is not the case. The most important objects of study vary with the general progress of learning, which is every day extending its limits, with the circumstances of different countries, and with the destination of different individuals. In any particular institution the topics of instruction should be selected and adjusted to each other, with reference to the general design of

such an institution; and so that the most effective use may be made of the means with which it is furnished. If the means of such an institution are ample, it should be accommodated to the literary wants of the community in which it exists; and of these, none but literary men can judge. Your memorialists believe, that the college of which they are officers is not such an institution as our country demands and would support; nor such as it has ample means to become. They think it capable of assuming a much higher character, and of being much more extensively useful.

But whether this opinion be correct or not, it cannot be denied, that it is of the highest importance, that the governors of a literary institution, like the college, should be qualified, if not individually, yet collectively, to judge of the relative importance of different studies, both generally, and in reference to all the particular circumstances under which such an institution may exist. They should, then, be men of letters by profession. Literature and science should be their business. But this has been, and, probably, considering the state, of our society, will be rarely the case with laymen elected as members of the Corporation from the community at large. They may be gentlemen to whom literature is a recreation, and even an occasional employment; but they will not be, strictly speaking, men of letters. They will not be men the business of whose lives has relation to the objects of a literary institution. Nor will the case, generally speaking, be very different with clergymen. Pressed as our clergy are with professional duties, they have often but little leisure to attend to any studies not immediately connected with these duties.

It may be objected, perhaps, that mere men of letters will have too narrow views of the wants and demands of the community in reference to a literary institution. I have stated the objection as forcibly as is in my power; but I confess I do not distinctly apprehend it. If it related to any other than a literary institution, I should perceive its force. Men of letters would certainly form bad managers of an agricultural society. They would have too narrow views. They would want information, practical experience, and the requisite habits of life. But in regard to a literary institution, who can be imagined to have more extensive views, to understand its proper objects, the means of promoting them, and their





various bearings upon society, better than men, all whose occupations have relation to these objects? Is it thought that men of letters will be too secluded a class, and not capable of catching the opinions and feelings of society? The first question is, whether there are others more capable than they are of forming just opinions respecting the management of a literary institution, and to whose opinions, therefore, they ought to defer? What would be thought of a similar objection as applied to the managers of an agricultural society;—that practical farmers were not to be taken, because not mixing much with the fashionable and literary classes of our metropolis, they could not learn the opinions and feelings prevailing among those classes, respecting the newest and best modes of husbandry. But the whole objection proceeds upon a wrong assumption. There is, and there can be, in this country, no secluded class of literary men. With us, men of letters mix in common society like other men, and have full opportunity of obtaining all the information which can be derived from such intercourse. Is it thought, then, that literary men will be disposed to estimate too highly the importance of particular branches of study, to the neglect of others? Undoubtedly there is danger, that this may be the case with individuals. But in the resident instructers of the college, you have a body of men, engaged in the pursuit of very different branches of knowledge, who would act upon each other, and correct each others opinions, and liberalize each others minds; each of whom would take care that his own branch should not be neglected; and all of whom, collectively, would adjust and balance, in the most proper manner, the different studies to be pursued at the institution. But I would further observe, that it is less common for men of real learning to estimate extravagantly the importance of any particular branch of study, than for those who have only a superficial knowledge of it. There were very few among us who, from their acquaintance with the subject, were better qualified to judge of the true value of the study of the Latin language than Professor Frisbie; and there were none, I believe, whose judgment respecting its value was more correct and more free from prejudice. There is a gentleman near me, who has done much more than is generally known, to improve the course of mathematical studies in the university, much more





than is probably known to a majority of those whom I have the honor of addressing; yet it is not from him, that I should expect an over-estimate of the value of these studies.

There can, then, I conceive be no reasonable doubt, that a literary institution should be committed in the first instance to literary men; that they should have power to originate its laws and regulations, under whatever ultimate supervision and control and responsibility to the community, may be thought proper. It is from this class of men, and from this class alone, that a body of individuals can be taken, who may fairly be expected to have the most just and the most comprehensive views of the objects of such an institution, and of the means of promoting them.

It seems, therefore, a singular anomaly, that the governors of the first literary institution of our country should be men, neither practically acquainted with its concerns, nor so selected as probably to secure even a majority of individuals, the business of whose lives is intimately connected with the objects of such an institution. Every one would be struck with the absurdity of entrusting the concerns of a mercantile body, to those who were not merchants, or of an agricultural society, to those who were not agriculturists; and the absurdity would be greatly enhanced, if the gentlemen who received the trust, were, at the same time, so separated from the establishment which it was there business to govern, as to render it impossible for them to acquire any practical knowledge of its concerns. If a number of gentlemen taken from the officers of the college, resident at Cambridge, occupied with all their present duties, were selected to manage the affairs of a bank or insurance company in Boston, and were to proceed without any consultation with its present directors, excepting the president of the latter body, your memorialists conceive that the case, however strange, would afford an analogy to the manner in which the government of the college is at present conducted.

The third requisite, formerly mentioned, in the governors of the college is, that they should be so circumstanced as to be able fully to attend to its concerns. This, it is believed, is not at present the case. On the contrary a large proportion of the members of the Corporation, as that body has been for some time constituted, are gentlemen whose thoughts

and time are occupied and pressed upon by a variety of business, and by public and private concerns, which must draw away their attention from those of the college, and leave them but little leisure for the proper management of such an institution. Their regular occupations and private affairs, which must, in most cases, occupy their chief attention, are quite foreign from the concerns of the college. Its various and complicated interests can be regarded by them only as an occasional subject of attention. But, on the other hand, the business and concerns of the college are the proper and personal business of the resident officers. Their time and thoughts are due to the institution, and necessarily given to it. Nor is this all. A gentleman elected into the Corporation, as at present constituted, assumes his office, ignorant, perhaps, of its very duties, and most probably without such information respecting the college, as may enable him in any degree to form opinions and rely upon his own judgment. Hence arises a new demand upon his time. He is called upon to occupy himself in acquiring that preliminary knowledge, without which he cannot act with propriety. But this knowledge, which to others must be of slow and difficult attainment, is to the resident instructers a matter of daily and necessary acquisition in the performance of their regular duties. They can hardly be ignorant of what others can hardly learn. In managing the government of the college, therefore, instead of being drawn away from their common concerns, they would only be occupied in their appropriate business; and, together with this, the actual demand upon their time would be far less, than upon the time of non-resident gentlemen.

The governors of the college should be a very vigilant and active body, intimately acquainted with, and constantly attentive to its concerns. As the Corporation is at present constituted, it is impossible it should be so.

I have only to speak of the fourth and last qualification mentioned, that the personal interest and reputation of the governors of the college should be evidently and deeply implicated in the prosperity and decline of the institution; that its good or bad state should be continually pressed upon their observation, and be to them a matter of private feeling, like their own domestic concerns. But the resident instructers, and especially those of their number who are permanent





officers of the college, are the only individuals whose reputations and interests can be strongly implicated with those of the college. Their character, their standing in society, their comfort, and, in a considerable degree, their very means of support, depend upon its respectability and usefulness. Their offices and situations mark them out, and mark them out alone, for public observation. If the institution decline, they suffer the blame; they are the persons complained of; it may be, and it has been, I think, most unjustly; but still it is so. They ought to receive the praise if it should flourish; and if those measures which the present state of things requires, be adopted, they will receive it. There is every circumstance to designate them as the responsible officers of the college except one—except the entire want of those powers which ought to accompany such responsibility. But, on the other hand, it is scarcely known out of a small circle, who are the governors of the college, according to the existing distribution of power; that is to say, who are the members of the Corporation. Before the present discussions, it would probably have required some effort of memory, even for an individual immediately connected with the college, to have stated correctly the names of the six non-resident members, who with the President constitute that body. The mode in which it is constituted, its duties, its very extensive powers, its almost absolute control in the government of the college, are very little understood by the community. Its members are not before the public as individuals responsible for the state of the institution. On the contrary, whether the college be well or ill governed, in a very good or very bad state, no member of that board, with the single exception of the President, who is a resident officer, will gain or lose either in interest or reputation to any considerable degree, most probably not at all. It would seem then to be an arrangement singularly inexpedient and unwise, by which the government of the college is taken from the resident instructers, from those who have the strongest private interest in its prosperity, and the good management of its concerns; and given to non-resident gentlemen, in whom, from the nature of the case, no interest of the same kind can exist.

If there be any force in the preceding reasoning, it follows, that the governors of the college, in the sense in which I have explained that term, should be its resident instructers; in

other words, that they should be men practically acquainted with its concerns; men whose studies and occupations, the business of whose lives, have a constant reference to the great objects of such an institution; men who are so circumstanced as to be able fully to attend to its concerns; and men whose personal interests, are involved in the interests of the college, and dependent on its prosperity. The governors of the college have, on the contrary, for some time, consisted, with the exception of the President, of gentlemen who either are, or have been, during the greater part of their lives, actively engaged in occupations or pursuits, foreign from the objects of the institution; men of high eminence in the profession of the law, whose minds, in consequence, were continually occupied with the cares and labors which this profession imposes upon its most distinguished members; men of business engaged in a great variety of private and public concerns; and clergymen, some of them of the very highest eminence, and already placed in situations, where their health was wasting under the necessary demands upon their time and thoughts and strength. But the complicated concerns of the college, having such a variety of relations to each other, and to the best interests of society; to be carefully viewed under so many aspects; and in order to understand which, so many particular facts and circumstances must be distinctly comprehended; these concerns are not a subject to be understood and decided upon in the occasional meetings of a body thus constituted. Without, therefore, the slightest imputation upon that body, I conceive that its very constitution, connected with the powers which it has hitherto exercised in the government of the college, is sufficient to account for all the deficiencies and evils which are perceived to exist in the institution.

My reasoning upon the subject, it will be perceived, has been wholly abstract. It is reasoning, relating to the proper mode of governing a college, such as might be urged *a priori*, supposing no such institution in existence, no experiment to have been tried. I shall not enter into details respecting the history of the college to illustrate what has been said; for I am most solicitous to avoid every thing which might lead, however indirectly, to any degree of personal excitement. On this grave and most important subject, we can decide wisely only by divesting ourselves as far as possible of passion and





prejudice, and keeping our minds steadily and coolly fixed upon the great objects which we all have so much at heart. But there is one case, intimately connected with the present discussions, to which I may advert without giving pain to any individual.

There has now existed for a considerable period a general and earnest wish for some essential improvement in the condition of the college. Between four and five years since, as I have already stated, the attention of the Corporation was particularly directed to this subject, not in consequence of any information which that board itself possessed, nor of the representations of any member of that body; but in consequence of an application from without. The Corporation then took means to be informed of the real state of the institution of which they were the governors. They took the most proper means. They addressed the circular, before mentioned, to the resident officers. They applied to the only source from which they could obtain the information required. But it is an obvious remark, that this was information of which they had been in constant need, as much at one period as at another, to enable them to carry on the government of the institution. In order, however, to obtain the information requisite to qualify them to be its governors, they were obliged to resort to a new measure, out of the common course of proceedings, and one before wholly unknown. It is another obvious remark, that when representations were laid before the governors of the college, according to which, essential changes were required in the institution, these representations were either correct or not. If correct, the governors of the college ought surely to have been the persons first aware of the true state of things; they should have needed no intimation of it from without; I should rather say, they ought long before to have anticipated the necessity of any essential changes, and to have prevented the deficiences and evils complained of. If the representations laid before them were not correct, the governors of the college ought surely to have been the individuals best qualified from their personal knowledge to say that they were not correct, and to justify the course of measures which had been pursued. It is clear that the whole state of the case in these respects was different from what it ought to have been. Upon receiving the answers of the resident officers,

the Corporation gave their earnest and faithful attention to the subject. But nothing has, in consequence, been effected by that body. Its members felt too deep an interest in the institution, and have been too well aware of the difficulty of the subject, to introduce any rash or immature changes, or to make any uncertain experiment. At the same time, they have had neither the requisite information, nor leisure, nor practical experience, to decide upon and arrange any new measures — to adjust a new system, of the propriety of which they themselves should be satisfied. They, therefore, have accomplished nothing. Yet the pressure and urgency of the case cannot well be greater. The call for improvement from within and from without the college, will hardly be more distinct, for if not now answered, it will be succeeded almost by despair. Nor can you reasonably expect more honest zeal or more faithful intentions in any non-resident gentlemen who may hereafter become members of the Corporation.

What then is to be done? What is to be done, not merely to effect those changes, which are, at the present moment, necessary to the prosperity of the college, but in order to keep up that constant course of progression and improvement which the community demands. You, surely, will not suffer this most important institution, intrusted to your care, to be irregularly acted upon by uncertain or accidental impulses from without; you, surely, will not suffer to be forced upon its governors or instructers, any new theoretical system, the work of unauthorized, unapparent, irresponsible individuals, however respectable they may be. In order to restore the college to the state, in which it ought to be, and to preserve it in that state, you will not, I am confident, be ready to trust to the zeal and care of any others, than its proper governors and officers, exerting themselves in the regular discharge of their official duties. I would beg leave most respectfully to observe, that in all the late discussions respecting the college before this Reverend and Honorable Body, the true question that arises, is, not what particular laws and regulations, what specific system of discipline and instruction shall be adopted; for these are topics obviously of a nature not to be fully examined in so large and popular an assembly, the members of which can give but a few hours' attention to the subject; the true question is, to what permanent and responsible body,





acting under your supervision and control, shall be intrusted power of devising such a system, of adjusting its parts, of watching its operations, of supplying the deficiencies, which experience may discover, and of making those additions and improvements which the progress of the Institution may demand.

The resident officers, I mean the resident officers of the Immediate Government, of which I have not the honor to be a member, may be considered as having offered themselves to undertake the labor of improvement. They have not shrunk from the task however difficult, or from the responsibility however arduous, for they have felt it their duty, at least to make a distinct offer of their services. Upon the propriety of committing it to them, there is, as every intelligent friend of the college must rejoice to perceive, a growing unanimity of opinion. When the subject is distinctly understood, there will, I am confident, be but one opinion. To obtain the necessary power to effect the changes which the state of the college imperiously requires, was the main object of their memorial; and if this power can be obtained in another form, they will be well content.

The propriety of the principle maintained in the observations that have been made, has, in our own country, been illustrated by experience. I believe, it will be found, that every literary institution among us, other things being equal, has flourished in proportion as the government of it, considered merely as a literary institution, has been virtually intrusted to the resident instructers. I say, virtually, for the power may be given them in fact, when it is not in form. The Theological Seminary at Andover has grown with unparalleled rapidity. I do not refer to the amount of wealth, which has been so liberally poured out upon it. But I refer to the rapid manner in which the standard of education has been raised. The growth of this institution is, I believe, to be referred principally to the fact, that it has been confided to the care of its professors; that they have not been embarrassed and impeded in any plans of improvement; that instead of being destitute of any power, like the resident instructers at Cambridge, they have, by courtesy or usage, no matter how, possessed all the power necessary to render it what they have been desirous it should become; that they have at once felt that

they were responsible for its character; and have exercised power commensurate to this responsibility.

I had intended to speak of some other evils, resulting from the present distribution of powers among the different bodies which constitute the government of the college; but I have been compelled to regard the time allowed me for preparation; for the whole subject is one of such importance, that no man ought to speak upon it without weighing his words; and I must likewise regard the time, during which I may reasonably ask for the attention of your Reverend and Honorable Body. I will touch upon them, therefore, very briefly.

One is the want of responsibility in any body of men or in any individual, as the government of the College is at present constituted, and its powers distributed. Supposing the institution to be falling into decline and ruin, to be in a worse state than has been described or imagined; who is responsible for it? Who is accountable to the public? Not the resident officers; for at present they are merely executive officers. They have no power of originating laws. However bad the whole system of discipline and instruction may at any time be, they have no power to correct it. Beside, if the decline of the institution be owing to them, this very fact transfers the responsibility from them to others. Such men ought not to have been appointed; such men ought not to have been continued in office. Are the Corporation, then, regarded as accountable for the state of the college; are they actually made responsible for it to the public? The responsibility of this body corresponds in no degree to its extensive powers. On this subject, I would refer to the statements already made. The Corporation is a body too little known. Its members are so circumstanced, that they are not brought prominently before the public as accountable for their measures. Their real powers are very little understood. To those acquainted with the subject, it is clear, that they cannot have the requisite knowledge, or the requisite leisure, to attend fully to the concerns of the college. They are wholly disinterested in giving their time to the institution. It is a gift to the public, and it is hard to ask why more is not given; especially when the obvious answer is, that reserving a due portion for their private concerns, and for other public interests, more cannot be given.





But there is another consideration. When the power of devising and establishing, and the power of executing a system of instruction and discipline, are divided, the former given to the Corporation, as at present constituted, and the latter to the resident instructers; no proper accountability can be made to rest upon either body. If the institution decline, the one body may charge the fault upon the system, and the other body may retort the charge, that the defect is not in the system but in the execution; and who is to decide the controversy? What proportion of the public can be expected so to investigate the subject, as to determine on whom censure should justly fall? This divided and uncertain responsibility will be found in its operation to amount to little better than none.

On the contrary, if the whole government of the college, considered as a literary institution, were committed in the first instance to the resident instructers, their power and their responsibility would be commensurate. Those whom the public naturally regard as accountable for the state of the institution, would become fairly and fully accountable for it. Your Reverend and Honorable Body would know where to direct your inquiries, and to whom to look, when any evil or any complaint existed. You would be brought at once into immediate connexion with the resident instructers; a circumstance which alone would be of the highest advantage to the college. In pursuing a right course, they would be encouraged and animated by your support and approbation. But your connexion with the resident instructers, considered as mere executive officers, appointed and directed by the Corporation, must of course be very limited and inoperative.

I know it has been objected to giving the resident officers those powers for which I have been contending; that in civil government, it is thought wise to separate the legislative from the executive power, and that the same principle should be adopted in the government of a literary institution. I have before observed, that no reasoning is more deceptive than reasoning from loose and imperfect analogies. In regard to the present case, I would ask why the analogy is not carried a little further. Of the two, it is certainly more important in civil government to separate the judiciary, than the legislative power, from the executive. Why then do not those,

who urge the objection which has been stated, propose that the judiciary power should be taken from the executive officers of the college. Their analogical reasoning, if it prove any thing, proves that there should be one body, the Corporation, as at present constituted, to make laws; and one body, the resident officers, to execute these laws; and a third body, not yet in existence, who should exercise the judiciary power. But even with this improvement, we should have but a poor, deceptive semblance of a well organized civil government. In civil government, it is with us a fundamental principle, that all power emanates from the governed. In order therefore to model our college government after the fashion of the former, our three bodies, the Corporation, the resident officers, and the new bench of judges, must all be elected by those who are to be governed, by the undergraduates. We may push the absurdity further in every direction. They should all be chosen by them from their own number. I trust it will be acknowledged, that an analogy is of no force which leads directly to such conclusions. The parental approaches much nearer, than civil government, to being a proper model for the government of young men, collected as students at a literary institution.

I will now mention one incidental evil, but an evil of very considerable magnitude, which results from the present constitution of the government of the college, and the present division of power between the Corporation composed of non-resident members, and the resident instructers of the college. The resident officers are, in the nature of things, the proper representatives of the college; and would become so in fact, if those powers were given to them, which they ought to possess. But at present the Corporation are the representatives of the college. They are its governors in the most extensive sense of the words. They appropriate its funds, appoint its officers, direct its studies, and make its laws. The whole character of the institution is to be determined by them. By their regulations, especially those regarding the expenses of the students, and the charges upon them, they may lay open its advantages to a greater, or confine them to a smaller number. They may make it an institution merely for the rich, and for those who are supported by its charity; or they may extend its benefits to the whole community. But in





selecting non-resident gentlemen as members of the Corporation, men of distinguished eminence will, of course, be taken. They will be members of one or another of the political parties into which the state may be divided; often among the leading and most prominent individuals of that party. When there is any warmth of political contention, the members of the Corporation will, in filling a vacancy in their body, select a candidate whose opinions correspond with their own. The Corporation will thus be perpetuated in one political party, and the college will be in the hands of one political party. In these statements no one will imagine that any blame is imputed to the members of the Corporation. What has been described is only the natural and almost necessary course of things. But the effect of it is, to give a foreign, adventitious, political character to the college, which will render it obnoxious to one of the two great parties in the state; and may, perhaps, even to a majority of its citizens. At the present moment, when there is a mutual spirit of conciliation, when men of opposite parties are ready to respect each other's principles, when political distinctions seem to be melting away, nothing, it is true, is to be apprehended from the circumstance which I have mentioned. But if times of political heat and controversy should return, then the evil would be felt; as it has been felt. The college with that extrinsic, political character which now attaches to it, would then, instead of being considered as the common interest of the community, be regarded by many of our citizens with coldness, jealousy, and hostility. But transfer a portion of the powers of the Corporation to the resident instructers; make them, as they ought to be, the representatives of the college, and this evil will be removed. The resident instructers are little likely to be distinguished as political partisans. They have kept aloof, and in all ordinary times, may be expected to keep aloof from political contests. As literary men, as instructers of the college, their objects in life must be very different from those of political ambition. As governors of the college, they will excite no political jealousy or enmity. Remote from the exasperating controversies of party, and laboring for the common good without distinction, they may reasonably hope to be regarded, at all times, at least with forbearance and respect, and, probably, with favor and kindness. The change in the

powers of the resident instructers, by giving the Overseers a tangible and distinct subject of supervision, would necessarily increase the interest of this Reverend and Honorable Body in the institution. But the Overseers are the representatives of the community; and will always sufficiently bear the character of those sentiments and feelings which prevail in the community. If the change, therefore, which has been proposed, should be adopted, it may be hoped that the college will never, hereafter, be regarded as an institution belonging to one political party; but become, as it formerly has been, an object of interest and pride to the whole commonwealth.

In the letter from which I have read some extracts, it may be recollected that two additional proposals were made; the one that the power of nominating to offices of government and instruction should be given to the resident instructers; the other, that two of their number should be admitted as members of the Corporation. I shall urge no arguments in support of either, beside the few suggestions already made in that letter. I have not had leisure to prepare myself in such a manner as to be ready to address this Honorable Body on those subjects; and even if I had had sufficient leisure, I should still be unwilling to make a further demand on your attention, or divert, in any degree, your consideration from that main proposition, which seems to me fundamental, namely, that the resident instructers should have the power of originating all laws respecting the instruction and discipline of the college.

I will add but a few more words. When great evils exist, there is always a disposition to criminate individuals. It is the fault of narrow-minded men, and perhaps even of some who are not narrow-minded, to be disposed to make some person or some body of men, the object of censure. But if any good is to result from these discussions respecting the state of the college, all this must be forborne. I do not say that there have not been faults, and perhaps great faults, committed by individuals. It is as little my object to exculpate as to criminate any one. But I do say, that the fault essentially is not in individuals, but in the system. You cannot expect to find more distinguished, more able, or more honorable men, to compose the Corporation of the college, than a majority of those gentlemen who have for some time been its members. You will find no individuals more faithful, more disinterested, and more conscientious, to fill the places of its present instructers.

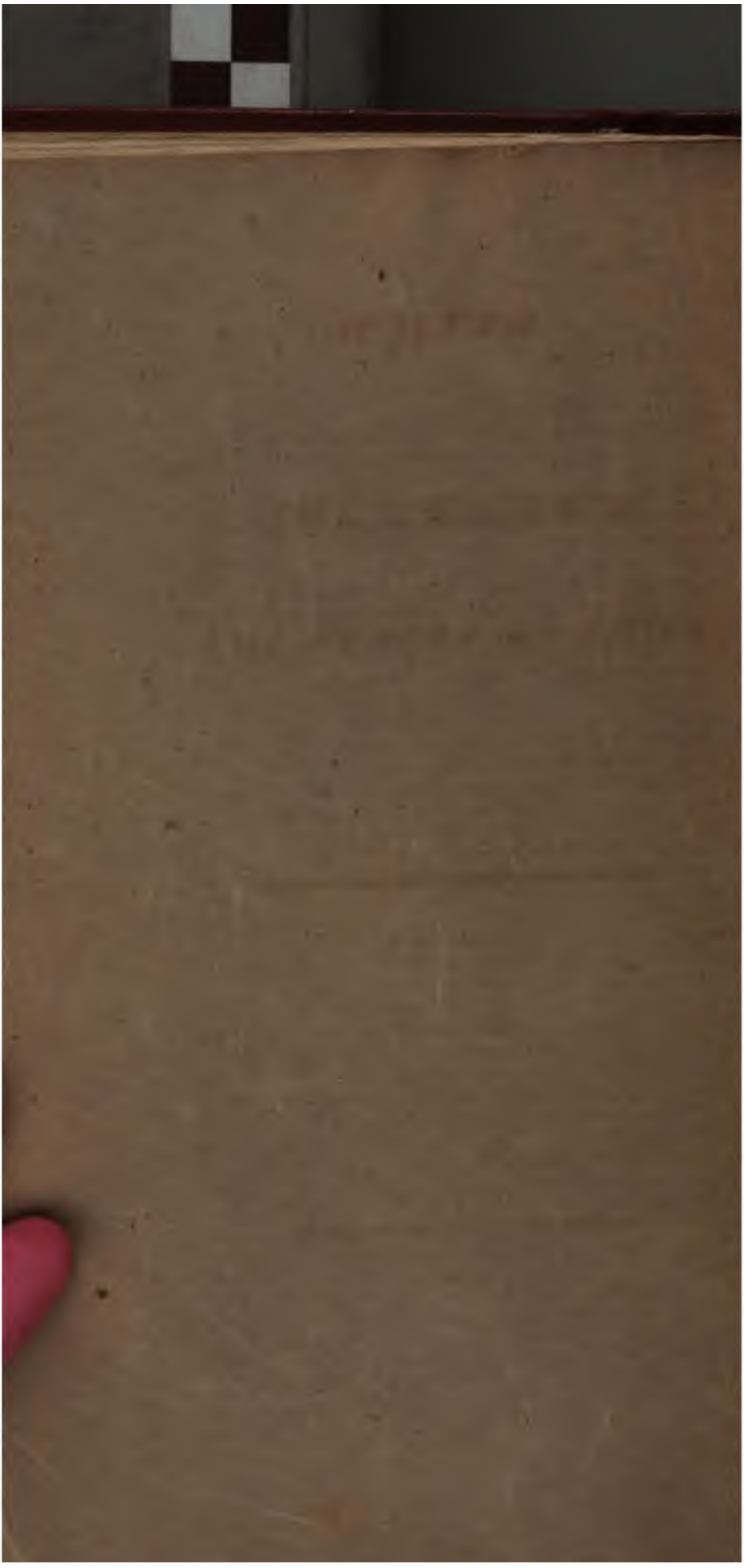
Feb. 22, which was called
, the subject of the election of Judge Jack-
brought before that Board, and his election was
vote of 30 to 21.








1826



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# REVIEW

OF

Felicia Dorothea Browne

## MRS HEMANS'

# FOREST SANCTUARY.

By

Andrews Norton.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER,

VOL. III. NO. V.

BOSTON,

PRINTED BY ISAAC R. BUTTS AND CO.

1826.



Review of The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems, by Mrs Hemans

# Review.

*The Forest Sanctuary; and other Poems.* By Mrs Hemans. 8vo. pp. 205. London. John Murray.

The writings of Mrs Hemans have been so justly estimated in this country, that any praise of ours can be little more than an echo of the public voice. Her poetry, so full of deep sentiment, so pure, and elevating, calls up images and emotions, like those with which we view the brilliancy of the evening star in the stillness of a summer night. It allies itself to every thing belonging to the better part of our nature. Her poems, indeed, are of unequal merit. In some of them, as the Voice of Spring and the Revellers, the conception is so imaginative, and there is such freedom of execution, that they approach nearer than almost any other poetry, to giving in words the very forms of thought and imagination. The imperfection of language, the embarrassments of versification, all that is material and mechanical disappears; and the vision floats before us 'an aery stream.' There is a correspondence of all the parts, contributing to a common effect; the flow and expression of the language is in accordance with the thought and sentiment; and the right tone of feeling, true to nature and virtue, is heard throughout, without failure or exaggeration. With this unbroken unity of character, her finer poems 'discourse most eloquent music.' The charm is found equally in others, very different from the two just mentioned. It appears, for instance, in the verses on a dead infant, suggested by one of Chantrey's statues, beginning, 'Thou sleepest; but when wilt thou wake, fair child?' The marble of Chantrey can hardly have more of calm, monumental, melancholy beauty than these lines. It appears again in the dreamy and shadowy flow of images through her Elysium, over which is diffused so much truth and tenderness of feeling; in the rapid and strong conception, and lofty sentiment of her Pilgrim Fathers; in the solemn and gloomy grandeur of her Treasures of the Deep; in her magnificent reply to the question, Where slumber England's dead? and in the agony and triumph of moral energy in her Gertrude. The subject of these last verses might have seemed too horrible for poetry; but with the commanding power o





true genius, and the strong sympathy of high feeling, she has brought to view all its moral sublimity; throwing a pall over what is hideous in physical suffering. But besides the poems entitled to be placed in the same class with those which have been named, there are others written with far less display of genius, but pleasing, correct, in good taste, elegant, or animated. These would have entitled their author to a distinguished rank among living poets. Those of a higher order, and there are many such, are permanent accessions to the literature of the world. They have increased the means of human refinement and virtue.

In estimating the value of poetry, and the same is true of eloquence, the highest excellencies have not always been properly regarded. On the contrary, qualities opposite to them give to many a certain kind of pleasure, and have been objects of admiration. The highest excellencies of the poet, or of the eloquent writer, are truth, in a very extensive sense of the term, and moral beauty and sublimity. In other words, that poetry or eloquence is most excellent, which is most adapted to give pleasure to him, who apprehends and feels most justly as a moral and intellectual being. To this end, it must discover truth of perception, showing a just and full apprehension of the nature and relations of things. It must be characterized by truth of imagination. The ideal forms which it presents, as images of real existences, must be only nature fully developed, and freed from all foreign and incongruous modifications; and the boldest combinations of qualities which it creates, must be possible and consistent. It must have truth of sentiment; expressing throughout a conformity of the judgment and taste of the writer, to the laws of the moral universe in their numberless bearings. It must display truth of feeling, a pervading mind, vividly and delicately sensible to the real character of the objects with which it is conversant; and with powers and affections so controlled and self-balanced, as to be affected neither in a different mode from what it ought to be, nor too much, nor too little. As regards truth of expression, it requires a a full knowledge and mastery of language, an acquaintance with the true meaning of words, and with the various associations which throw on them a reflected coloring; a command of imagery, and of the other modes of speech in which feeling and emotion express themselves; and, in general, a control of all the means with which language furnishes us, of

directly or indirectly communicating to the minds of others the very thoughts and affections of our own. When resolved into their elements, perfect poetry and perfect eloquence are only perfect truth, perceived and felt in all its relations. Their object is to make known to us in its real nature and power what exists, or what it is possible may exist. Fictions, images, figures, the boldest and most imaginative, are, in their proper use, but means of expressing what is essentially true, in a manner more delightful or impressive, that is, in a manner better corresponding to its actual character. They are beautiful hieroglyphics, teaching wisdom and virtue.

Truth in the abstract, as we are now considering it, is violated by exaggerated statements and descriptions; by extravagant expressions of feeling or passion; by exhibiting fictitious characters and combinations of qualities, such as do not exist, and such as it is impossible should exist; by giving a deceptive aspect and coloring to moral feelings, dispositions, and habits, and thus disguising what is evil and good; by presenting a partial and erroneous view of a subject accommodated to some particular purpose; by the expression, direct or indirect, of a false taste, an unsound judgment, or perverted affections; and, in a few words, by every thing which discovers a vicious, a narrow, a prejudiced, or an ignorant mind.

But supposing one to think, to feel, and to express himself with truth; supposing him to be thus far gifted as a poet; what are the most noble and affecting objects with which his mind can be conversant, and which he can make the subjects of his art? They are those of a moral nature; the beautiful and the sublime in the moral world. All merely physical deformity is inoffensive, compared with moral deformity. All merely physical beauty is faint, compared with moral beauty. Moral nature is the most interesting object of contemplation; and the most delightful is moral goodness, in all its inexhaustible variety of exhibition, from the laughing smile of innocent childhood, up to the stern resolve of him 'by neither number nor example, wrought to swerve from truth;' or manifested in its highest and most solemn display, as the life, light, and blessing of the universe. The stronger perception and feeling we have of loveliness or its awfulness, the nearer we have approached its the perfection of our nature. We see all the forms of beauty, attracted toward it, connected with it, or melting into it, as their perfect display. All that is permanently pleasing or ennobling consists in, or is associated with, moral good-





ness; all that is permanently odious and degrading consists in, or is connected with, moral evil. It is to moral associations, as is well known to all who have studied the principles of taste, that the natural world owes its greatest charms. It has power over us, principally as a collection of symbols and emblems representing moral qualities, or suggesting them to the imagination. The modes of moral beauty and sublimity, of what is agreeable, excellent, or ennobling, are numberless; and may be brought before us in many ways. The spirit which has power to touch the heart, may breathe in a song of tenderness and disinterested affection, or be heard in the 'clarion voice,' of power 'to cheer in the mid battle;' it may gather round the grave the sorrows, recollections, and hopes of an immortal being; it may give energy to language to lift the soul to its GOD; it may utter the earnest tones of persuasion; it may communicate an irresistible force to reasoning; it may speak in strong indignation; it may pour moral life through a tale of fiction, and it may give a sublime interest to what without it would be only painful, the description of human suffering and misery. In this its power is conspicuously shown. Scenes of suffering become fit subjects for poetry or fiction, principally, because they afford an opportunity for the exhibition of high and uncommon virtues. The delight with which we contemplate these virtues, and our sympathy with them, counteract and control the pain, which alone might be otherwise felt from our sympathy with the sufferings described.

In the drama, in fictitious narrative, or whenever the poet brings before us imaginary characters, moral truth and beauty consist in representing them with such qualities as are congruous to each other, and may exist together; and in exhibiting these qualities, such as they are, accompanied with their proper effects. The writer must present no deceptive portraitures of our moral nature. He must show what is good as good, and what is evil as evil. The proper purpose of his imaginary world and the beings of his creation, is to give a connected, complete, distinct, and striking view of characters, qualities, actions, and their consequences, which in the real world, we see only in an imperfect state, partially and by glimpses, implicated in many accidental connexions, and operating obscurely through a course of years. If he accomplish this purpose, his pictures are true to nature; they embody the results of human observation and experience,

and they correspond, therefore, to the lessons of wisdom and virtue.

Thus then, to use the terms in their most extensive sense, the just conception and true expression of moral goodness, constitute the supreme excellence of poetry; and unless it possess this excellence in some degree or other, poetry is of little worth. The strain which is heard must be in accordance with the harmony of the universe, with the music of its unseen spheres; or it will be only discord to him, who has so raised himself, that his ears are open to that solemn sound. There can be nothing beautiful which is opposite in its nature to the highest beauty; but many inferior things may partake of its reflected lustre, or have an according beauty of their own. The shells and shining pebbles on the seashore, which, as Cicero tells us, Scipio and Lælius stooped to pick up, with the feelings of boyhood returning upon them, *incredibiliter repuerascere soliti*, may please us with their fine forms and colors, and awaken a train of touching thoughts and recollections, even while the unbounded ocean spreads before us, a visible emblem of infinity, brilliant with a flood of light, and rolling, with ceaseless sound, its eternal and evervarying waves. Moral excellence, though the highest, is not the only source of refined and innocent gratification in the world of the imagination any more than in the real world. Unfortunately too, in correspondence with what we find in the real world, the pleasure which poetry affords, may arise from the gratification of depraved passions, and a corrupt taste. It may be admired for qualities the very opposites of those which constitute its preeminent worth. It may be made to minister to evil, as well as good; and its services, in the one case, as in the other, will have their reward. The taste of a man is formed upon his character, or rather it is only an expression of his character. Individuals will be gratified by the same objects presented to their imagination, as gratify their inclinations and appetites in real life, and with the expression of those emotions and passions which they are accustomed to indulge. The profligate will be pleased with what is licentious; the illtempered man, with virulent sarcasm; the unprincipled, with the levity that regards nothing as serious; the irreligious man, with profaneness; the disappointed and envious, with the bitter language of discontent and misanthropy; and thus, in these and in other instances, gross faults may form with certain readers the chief recommendation





of a work. They have sometimes contributed much to the temporary popularity of writings.

The skill of the artist, likewise, may be shown, when the subject about which it is employed is offensive; and the perception of the skill of the artist constitutes one of the principal sources of the pleasure afforded by a work of art. The display of intellectual power, of the mastery of mind, is, intrinsically, a source of elevating and grateful feelings. We sympathize with the energy which we perceive in action. But the highest gratification from this source can be afforded, only when the faculties of the mind are employed about subjects worthy of the intellectual and moral nature of man. He who has no taste for the highest beauty, can have but an imperfect perception even of its inferior modes; and must therefore want the power of giving their just expression. He who does not sympathize strongly with what is most excellent or lovely, and consequently what is most delightful, in character, can have but little skill in portraying it. His powers, however great, must be limited to a narrow circle. He cannot represent to us the finer and nobler forms of man's nature, though he may give a striking picture of it as disfigured and imperfect, and distorted by the violence of passion. Moral goodness admits of an indefinite variety of modifications and degrees, according to the intellectual power of the mind in which it resides. As we advance in improvement, new views of it present themselves; we perceive more clearly its extent and relations; our judgment is more correct, our moral sensibility becomes more delicate, the disguise which had concealed passions and failings, and perhaps made them appear as virtues, drops off; the incongruities of character pass away; we are acting in a higher sphere, and our hopes, affections, tastes, and motives are changed. The perfect exercise of moral goodness supposes the exercise of the highest intellect. It cannot be conceived of by a mind of a much lower order. It cannot, therefore, be depicted by such a mind. Wherever, then, it is beautifully or strikingly exhibited in thought or action, there the finest and rarest powers of intellect are displayed. The passages which touch us deeply by their moral beauty or sublimity stand out from the common mass of literature. A single trait of this kind is of more value than many volumes, which still maintain their place upon our shelves. How few readers are there of Corneille's *Horace*, who remember a single passage of that play, except

the burst of moral grandeur in the famous 'Qu' il mourut'? The whole sixty plays of Beaumont and Fletcher would be dearly purchased by the loss of Milton's Comus. The story of La Roche is worth half the volumes of English periodical papers; and who would part with the lovely vision of Grace Nugent, to save from destruction all the novels written before the age of Miss Edgeworth.

The difficulty of attaining to any high degree of moral beauty or sublimity, in works of imagination or eloquence, and the rare genius which it requires, may appear from the unsuccessful attempts which have been made. There is a crowd of writers, who, with the best intentions, have failed from incorrectness of judgment and moral taste, from the imperfection and narrowness of their views, from their coldness, their want of imagination, or from some inability to communicate to others what they themselves perceived and felt. In those works of eloquence which are directly addressed to men as immortal beings, in the sermons of Christian preachers, we might expect some near approach to that most excellent quality of writing which has been described. But one may read many volumes of English sermons, composed by writers of no mean talents, without finding a single passage which thrills the heart, or has any inspiring power. In fiction it has been said, that the exhibition of a perfect character is uninteresting and unnatural. But the perfection of our nature, is in no proper sense of the word unnatural;—*est autem virtus nihil aliud quam in se perfecta, et ad summum perducta natura*;—and if the attempts to exhibit the most pleasing, and the most admirable qualities, as embodied in an individual, have been uninteresting; it is not because they have been executed, but because they have failed. The failure, indeed, has often been striking. There are religious novels, for instance, in which the individual intended as an example of Christian excellence, is represented as narrow-minded, with erroneous views of religion and duty, and somewhat ostentatious, dogmatical, and censorious. Richardson was not a writer of ordinary powers; and in his Sir Charles Grandison he has endeavoured to give us in the best manner, his finest conceptions of moral excellence. There is much to admire and to be pleased with. But the virtues of Sir Charles are those which flow from unvaried prosperity, not the highest, nor the most difficult, nor the most interesting. He is so lauded and adored, that the reader grows

weary and almost splenetic with his praises; and when we have laid aside the volumes, the author's *beau ideal* of moral beauty leaves scarcely any other image in the mind, except that of a very rich, very fortunate, well principled, well intentioned, well behaved, and rather formal gentleman, who, we fear, will be made a little self-conceited by the admiration of all about him. That genius and elevation of soul which might enable one to portray a character morally perfect, to bring down from heaven *expletam et perfectam formam honestatis*, is perhaps as little likely to be found as such a character itself; and if the perfection of man's nature were really presented to our minds, it would probably be very different from all ordinary conceptions of it; far more sublime as well as more lovely. To use again the language of Cicero, whom we have been led to quote so often, because he expresses the truest and noblest sentiments with the most splendid and glowing eloquence, it would appear *quiddam amplum atque magnificum, omnia humana non tolerabilia solum, sed etiam levia ducens, altum quiddam et excelsum, nihil timens, nemini cedens, semper invictum;* 'something grand and magnificent, regarding all the accidents of life as not only tolerable but of light concern, something high and exalted, fearing nothing, yielding to no one, always unconquered.'

The characters presented to us by poetry and fiction excite our interest in them, and give us direct pleasure in their contemplation, from the same qualities of mind and heart, as individuals in real life. The just exhibition of vicious character, may afford us pleasure, but it is a pleasure of a different kind, inferior in its nature. But it is not by the full exhibition of particular characters, alone, that poetry is adapted to delight, but by every thing which accords with our moral and intellectual nature as it unfolds itself in its progress toward unlimited improvement. But few poets, however, have felt that in this consisted the excellence and the power of their art.

Moral beauty being the highest beauty, it follows that a correct and refined moral taste is the most important constituent of a correct and refined taste in literature. Literary taste, without it, must be essentially defective and incorrect. As the expression of moral goodness in some form or another, constitutes a principal charm in almost every work of art, adapted to afford much gratification to a mind of large views and just sentiments, he, who has not a correct perception and strong feeling of its

excellence, is disqualified to judge of poetry or eloquence. He is deficient in the sense most requisite. For him to attempt it is something, as if a blind man were to undertake to judge of the beauty of the visible world.

Most readers will probably have anticipated the remark which we are about to make, that the works of Mrs Hemans are eminently distinguished by moral beauty, and the noble expression of high sentiments. Images of what is lovely, affecting, and glorious in human character are reflected from her mind as from an unsullied mirror. Of this her last volume affords some of the most striking examples. It is the praise of this lady, that her literary course has been one of continual improvement. With the exception, perhaps, of her tragedies, she has, heretofore, given to the world no long poem of equal power with her Forest Sanctuary. The argument of this poem is thus stated.

'The following poem is intended to describe the mental conflicts, as well as outward sufferings, of a Spaniard, who, flying from the religious persecutions of his own country in the sixteenth century, takes refuge with his child in a North American forest. The story is supposed to be related by himself amidst the wilderness which has afforded him an asylum.'

It commences with some verses in which domestic scenes and affections are called up in all their tenderness and beauty, and with all their power to touch the heart of an exile.

The voices of my home!—I hear them still!
They have been with me through the dreamy night—
The blessed household voices, wont to fill
My heart's clear depths with unalloy'd delight!
I hear them still, unchang'd:—though some from earth
Are music parted, and the tones of mirth—
Wild, silvery tones, that rang through days more bright!
Have died in others,—yet to me they come,
Singing of boyhood back—the voices of my home!

They call me through this hush of woods, reposing
In the grey stillness of the summer morn,
They wander by when heavy flowers are closing,
And thoughts grow deep, and winds and stars are born:
Ev'n as a fount's remember'd gushings burst
On the parch'd traveller in his hour of thirst,
E'en thus they haunt me with sweet sounds, till worn

By quenchless longings, to my soul I say—
O! for the dove's swift wings, that I might flee away,

And find mine ark!—yet whither?—I must bear
A yearning heart within me to the grave. pp. 3, 4.

After some other fine stanzas, expressing his recollections and feelings, the wanderer relates the circumstances that had led him to a knowledge of true religion, on account of the profession of which he had been obliged to fly his native country, and take refuge in the wilderness. He tells of his return, in his youth, from a foreign land on the morning of the day when an Auto da Fe was to be celebrated.

——— Clear, yet lone,
In the rich autumn light the vineyards lay,
And from the fields the peasant's voice was gone;
And the red grapes untrodden strew'd the ground,
And the free flocks untended roam'd around:
Where was the pastor?—where the pipe's wild tone?
Music and mirth were hush'd the hills among,
While to the city's gates each hamlet pour'd its throng.

Silence upon the mountains!—But within
The city's gates a rush—a press—a swell
Of multitudes their torrent way to win;
And heavy boomings of a dull deep bell,
A dead pause following each—like that which parts
The dash of billows, holding breathless hearts
Fast in the hush of fear—knell after knell;
And sounds of thickening steps, like thunder-rain,
That plashes on the roof of some vast echoing fane!

What pageant's hour approach'd?—The sullen gate
Of a strong ancient prison-house was thrown
Back to the day. pp. 9, 10.

He gazes on the sad procession which comes forth, till he perceives among them 'his heart's best friend,' Alvar, the friend of his boyhood, by whose side he had stood in battle, the preserver of his life,—accompanied by his two sisters. The characters of Alvar and his two sisters, 'queenlike Theresa, radiant Inez,' are admirably described. Theresa, the eldest, is represented as meeting her sufferings with an unbroken mind.

For the soft gloom whose shadow still had hung
On her fair brow, beneath its garlands worn,

Was fled; and fire, like prophecy's, had sprung
Clear to her kindled eye.

* * * *

And yet, alas! to see the strength which clings
Round woman in such hours!—a mournful sight,
Though lovely!—an o'erflowing of the springs,
The full springs of affection, deep as bright!
And she, because her life is ever twin'd
With other lives, and by no stormy wind
May thence be shaken, and because the light
Of tenderness is round her, and her eye
Doth weep such passionate tears—therefore she thus can die.
p. 21.

Theresa is followed by Inez, whose strength is prostrated by the horrors with which she is surrounded. The memory of her brother's friend, brings back the image of her former loveliness and gaiety, and a scene of calm and deep beauty in which he had once beheld her.

And she to die!—she lov'd the laughing earth
With such deep joy in its fresh leaves and flowers!
—Was not her smile even as the sudden birth
Of a young rainbow, colouring vernal showers?
Yes! but to meet her fawn-like step, to hear
The gushes of wild song, so silvery clear,
Which, oft unconsciously, in happier hours
Flow'd from her lips, was to forget the sway
Of Time and Death below,—blight, shadow, dull decay!

Could this change be?—the hour, the scene, where last
I saw that form, came floating o'er my mind:
—A golden vintage-eve;—the heats were pass'd,
And, in the freshness of the fanning wind,
Her father sat, where gleam'd the first faint star
Through the lime-boughs; and with her light guitar,
She, on the greensward at his feet reclin'd,
In his calm face laugh'd up; some shepherd-lay
Singing, as childhood sings on the lone hills at play. p. 24.

Alvar, Theresa, and Inez are bound to the stake. But the lover of Inez appears. He forces his way through the crowds on horseback, rushes to her, dashing off those who came to part them, and clasps her to his heart. He implores her to renounce her heresy and return to life.

She looked up wildly; there were anxious eyes
Waiting that look—sad eyes of troubled thought,
Alvar's, Theresa's!





The struggle is too much, the hues of death come over her, and her lover feels

———the heart grow still,
Which with its weight of agony had lain
Breaking on his.

The interest of the scene is now concentrated on Alvar and Theresa;

I saw the doubt, the anguish, the dismay,
Melt from my Alvar's glorious mien away,
And peace was there—the calmness of the just!
And, bending down the slumberer's brow to kiss,
"Thy rest is won," he said;—"sweet sister! praise for this!"
I started as from sleep;—yes! he had spoken—
A breeze had troubled memory's hidden source!
At once the torpor of my soul was broken—
Thought, feeling, passion, woke in tenfold force.
—There are soft breathings in the southern wind,
That so your ice-chains, O ye streams! unbind,
And free the foaming swiftness of your course!
—I burst from those that held me back, and fell
Ev'n on his neck, and cried—"Friend, brother! fare thee well!"
Did *he* not say "Farewell?"—Alas! no breath
Came to mine ear. Hoarse murmurs from the throng
Told that the mysteries in the face of death
Had from their eager sight been veil'd too long.
And we were parted as the surge might part
Those that would die together, true of heart.
—*His* hour was come—but in mine anguish strong,
Like a fierce swimmer through the midnight sea,
Blindly I rushed away from that which was to be.

Away—away I rush'd;—but swift and high
The arrowy pillars of the firelight grew,
Till the transparent darkness of the sky*
Flush'd to a blood-red mantle in their hue;
And, phantom-like, the kindling city seem'd
To spread, float, wave, as on the wind they stream'd,
With their wild splendour chasing me!—I knew
The death-work was begun—I veil'd mine eyes,
Yet stopp'd in spell-bound fear to catch the victims' cries.

What heard I then?—a ringing shriek of pain,
Such as for ever haunts the tortured ear?
—I heard a sweet and solemn breathing strain

* [The final scene of an Auto da Fe was sometimes from the length of the preceding ceremonies delayed till midnight.]

Piercing the flames, untremulous and clear!
—The rich, triumphal tones!—I knew them well,
As they came floating with a breezy swell!
Man's voice was there—a clarion voice to cheer
In the mid-battle—ay, to turn the flying—
Woman's—that might have sung of Heaven beside the dying!

It was a fearful, yet a glorious thing,
To hear that hymn of martyrdom, and know
That its glad stream of melody could spring
Up from th' unsounded gulf of human woe!
Alvar! Theresa!—what is deep? what strong?
—God's breath within the soul!—It fill'd that song
From your victorious voices!—but the glow
On the hot air and lurid skies increas'd—
—Faint grew the sounds—more faint—I listen'd—they had ceas'd! pp. 36—38.

These are glorious verses. They are lines which might give strength to a martyr before leaving his prisonhouse for the stake. We listen to a voice such as poetry has uttered but now and then in the lapse of ages, speaking worthily of the noblest energies and virtues of man.

To pass from this description without violence to the tone of feeling excited, required the finest genius and the truest sensibility. It is done with perfect success. The following stanzas immediately succeed those last quoted.

And thou indeed hadst perish'd, my soul's friend!
I might form other ties—but thou alone
Couldst with a glance the veil of dimness rend,
By other years o'er boyhood's memory thrown!
Others might aid me onward :—Thou and I
Had mingled the fresh thoughts that early die,
Once flowering—never more!—And thou wert gone!
Who could give back my youth, my spirit free,
Or be in aught again what thou hadst been to me?

And yet I wept thee not, thou true and brave!
I could not weep!—there gathered round thy name
Too deep a passion!—*thou* denied a grave!
*Thou*, with a blight flung on thy soldier's fame!
Had not I known thy heart from childhood's time?
Thy heart of hearts?—and couldst thou die for crime?
—No! had all earth decreed that death of shame,
I would have set, against all earth's decree,
Th' inalienable trust of my firm soul in thee! p. 39.

The friend of Alvar, the narrator of his own tale, flies 'to seek a refuge from man's face,' and enters in the night a 'mighty minster.' The morning dawns and the dim light falls on an altar piece, representing our Saviour delivering St Peter from the waves. This ideal picture is described with consummate power, and an image of Christ is presented, which, to our minds, is unrivalled in painting or poetry.

And soft, and sad, that colouring gleam was thrown,
Where, pale, a pictur'd form above the altar shone.

*Thy* form, thou Son of God!—a wrathful deep,
With foam, and cloud, and tempest, round thee spread,
And such a weight of night!—a night, when sleep
From the fierce rocking of the billows fled.
A bark shew'd dim beyond thee, with its mast
Bow'd, and its rent sail shivering to the blast;
But, like a spirit in thy gliding tread,
Thou, as o'er glass, didst walk that stormy sea
Through rushing winds, which left a silent path for thee—

So still thy white robes fell!—no breath of air
Within their long and slumberous folds had sway!
So still the waves of parted, shadowy hair
From thy clear brow flow'd droopingly away!
Dark were the Heavens above thee, Saviour!—dark
The gulfs, Deliverer! round the straining bark!
But thou!—o'er all thine aspect and array
Was pour'd one stream of pale, broad, silvery light—
—Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night!

Aid for one sinking!—Thy lone brightness gleam'd
On his wild face, just lifted o'er the wave,
With its worn, fearful, *human* look that seem'd
To cry through surge and blast—"I perish—save!"—
Not to the winds—not vainly!—thou wert nigh,
Thy hand was stretched to fainting agony,
Even in the portals of the unquiet grave!
O thou that art the life! and yet didst bear
Too much of mortal woe to turn from mortal prayer!

But was it not a thing to rise on death,
With its remember'd light, that face of thine,
Redeemer! dimm'd by this world's misty breath,
Yet mournfully, mysteriously divine?
—Oh! that calm, sorrowful, prophetic eye,
With its dark depths of grief, love, majesty!
And the pale glory of the brow!—a shrine

Where Power sat veil'd, yet shedding softly round
What told that *thou* couldst be but for a time uncrown'd!

And more than all, the Heaven of that sad smile!
The lip of mercy, our immortal trust!
Did not that look, that very look, erewhile,
Pour its o'ershadow'd beauty on the dust?
Wert thou not such when earth's dark cloud hung o'er thee?
—Surely thou wert!—my heart grew hush'd before thee,
Sinking with all its passions, as the gust
Sank at thy voice, along its billowy way:—
—What had I there to do, but kneel, and weep, and pray?
pp. 43—46.

The passages which we have quoted are abundantly sufficient to show the very high character of the poem before us. We will add but one more, a part of the prayer, which the doubting Catholic offers up to Christ. It would be difficult to find a more forcible argument against persecution.

Amidst the stillness rose my spirit's cry
Amidst the dead—"By that full cup of woe,
Press'd from the fruitage of mortality,
Saviour! for thee—give light! that I may know
If by *thy* will, in thine all-healing name,
Men cast down human hearts to blighting shame,
And early death—and say, if this be so,
Where then is mercy?—whither shall we flee,
So unallied to hope, save by our hold on thee?

"But didst thou not, the deep sea brightly treading,
Lift from despair that struggler with the wave?
And wert thou not, sad tears, yet awful, shedding,
Beheld, a weeper at a mortal's grave?
And is this weight of anguish, which they bind
On life, this searing to the quick of mind,
That but to God its own free path would crave,
This crushing out of hope, and love, and youth,
*Thy* will indeed?—Give light! that I may know the truth!
pp. 46, 47.

The poem is divided into two parts, and the preceding extracts have been taken from the first alone. They are given but as specimens of a work of which every page has beauties of its own. There is, at the same time, in this, as in Mrs Hemans' smaller poems, an unbroken harmony of character, and unity of effect, which add greatly to its impression on the





mind. It is not a collection of fragments of fine poetry, it is a beautiful whole.

'The Forest Sanctuary' fills about half the volume before us. The remainder is composed of shorter pieces, many of which had previously appeared in the New Monthly Magazine. A considerable proportion of them, however, will, we believe, be new to most of our readers; others, and those, perhaps, the most rich in the peculiar characteristics of her poetry, have been spread by our newspapers throughout the country. It is a fact highly creditable to the taste of our community, and, in particular, to the taste of the conductors of our public journals.

The volume of Mrs Hemans' Poems, for which proposals were issued a few months since, will now shortly be published. In typographical beauty and correctness it will in some degree correspond to the contents of the volume, and answer, it is hoped, to the just expectations of the subscribers. The difficulty of accomplishing these objects has been the principal cause of delay in its appearance. Immediately upon its publication, the Forest Sanctuary with the accompanying poems, will be put to the press, and printed uniformly with it. It should be understood that any publications of Mrs Hemans' works by the editor of these two volumes will be for the benefit of the author.





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# REVIEW

OF A

# SERMON DELIVERED AT NEW YORK,

DECEMBER 7, 1826.

BY WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

Andrews Norton.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

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1826.

# REVIEW

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The object of this sermon is to defend Unitarian Christianity on the ground of its peculiar 'fitness to promote true, deep, and living piety.' To a mind not prejudiced by education, and habits of life, not pledged to any system, nor bound to it by ties of interest, the force and clearness of reasoning with which this position is maintained, must be irresistible. Of this fact we venture to say that there will be decisive proof. The sermon may be attacked, complained of, criticised, perhaps reviled; men may shut their eyes to it; they may refrain from reading it, regarding it as a matter of conscience to keep themselves in error; or having read it, they may exclude it from their thoughts;—but it will not be answered. There will be, we think, no attempt to answer it, except, perhaps, by some one incapable of estimating either his own powers, or the force of argument. Undoubtedly men will go on for a time teaching and believing, or fancying they believe, the doctrines which it opposes; but this sermon affords a fair test how far truth and reason, expressed with the most convincing and persuasive eloquence, may avail against an inveterate error.





The intellectual power displayed in this discourse is not, however, a more striking characteristic of it, than the elevation, purity, and strength of feeling which it discovers, respecting the true character, and proper influence of religion. Let one who has just been reading the works of Calvin, or Edwards, or those of any of the thousand other writers of the same class, turn to this discourse. If he remain true to the moral sentiments which God has given us; he will feel that he is enjoying a new life; that he is raised, as it were, from some subterranean region of damps, chill and darkness, to breathe in the open air and light, to enjoy the genial warmth of nature, and to behold the glories of heaven and earth; that he holds converse with a mind of a far higher order, and of far other apprehensions and powers. The comparison which he will involuntarily make, may be expressed in the language of Virgil—

> Hinc exaudiri gemitus, et sæva sonare
> Verbera: tum stridor ferri, *tractæque catenæ*.
> * * * * *
> Largior hic campos æther, et lumine vestit
> Purpureo; solemque *suum*, *sua* sidera *norunt*.

The topic discussed in this sermon is one of the highest interest, and which required to be treated with all the freedom, openness, and strength of statement and expression which are used. We repeat what we have said, it is one of the highest interest, as affecting the moral condition, the intellectual improvement, and the happiness of man. There are some who appear to think that no studies or discussions are of importance except those, which tend directly to increase the amount of physical enjoyments, or to add to the vanities, the amusement, or the embellishment of life; or such as give a pleasant exercise to the mind, without any direct or inconvenient bearing upon men's sentiments and principles of action. According to them, the physical sciences must be advanced, poetry, the drama, works of fiction, and the fine arts are to be encouraged, history furnishes a pleasant recreation, political economy affords topics for discussion, and if wisely studied, may increase the wealth of individuals or of a nation, and there are other branches of learning which may promote a man's advancement in life; but as for metaphysics, the science of morals, and critical and doctrinal theology, a wise man will 'doff them aside, and let them pass.' The study of mind, of all that is active and immortal in our nature, of its powers and its laws, of those principles on

which its improvement depends;—the study of the nature, character and will of God, the most ennobling and affecting object of contemplation, the object of highest interest to beings who are entirely at his disposal;—a just acquaintance with incomparably the most wonderful events in the history of our race, relating to the direct interpositions of our Creator;—a correct conception of those truths which the Almighty has deemed of sufficient importance for himself to communicate to man;—right notions of the principles and extent of duty, of that science which has a continual operation upon our affections and conduct;—a true apprehension of our relations to God and eternity, and of all that is of serious concern in our hopes and fears;—those studies, in a word, which lay at the foundation of all correct principles of judgment, feeling, taste, and action, respecting the objects and events of life, are regarded by some as of scarcely any interest to a really practical and intelligent man, and as principally serving to minister occasions of strife and ill will to those who would be much better employed, if they would cease to disturb the opinions of their fellow men upon topics like these; seeing that it is of so little importance whether men believe what is true or false concerning them. Such persons will of course form a very different estimate of the merit and value of this sermon from what we do.

There is another class of readers, who, though agreeing with the author in the doctrine which he maintains, may not be quite satisfied with the discourse before us, and this through a little excess, perhaps, of humanity. It is unpleasant to a man to be opposed in an opinion, especially one which he has long entertained and obstinately defended. It is the more unpleasant, in proportion as the arguments brought against his opinion are clear and unanswerable. But his state of feeling becomes exceedingly disagreeable; he is even liable to be exasperated, when, notwithstanding these arguments, he is determined to retain his opinion. Now there are some who from a distinct perception of this state of mind, and a generous sympathy with their opponents, seem to regard it as a breach of christian charity to urge any reasoning with much clearness and force. To produce an unanswerable argument appears to them unfeeling and severe; and an impressive statement to which no objection can be made, is, in their view, little better than a sarcasm. If a writer express and defend his opinions very earnestly, as if thoroughly convinced of their truth and importance; it





exposes him, in their opinion, to the charge of arrogance, because it implies clearly that he thinks himself in the right, and that every one who differs from him must be in the wrong. According to their notions of the character required by our religion, it is necessary for a Christian to reason somewhat weakly and obscurely, with no great explicitness of language, or concentration of thought or argument, but in a diluted style; so that he may not offend the prejudices, and thus hurt the feelings of men of opposite opinions. But the sermon before us is deficient in all those excellencies.

Now we must confess that there seems to us some error in this view of the subject; and we cannot help fearing that this excess of charity may lead men to be a little uncharitable, and to charge a writer with faults from which he is wholly free. In our opinion, there is no tract of any writer to be named, breathing a more liberal and philosophic spirit than this discourse; discovering more of that enlargement of mind which regards man as the creature of God, and not as the follower of a sect; more thoroughly imbued with the purest christian sentiments, or showing a more single and devoted earnestness in the cause of truth, without any mixture of merely personal feeling. As for the complaint that the language of this discourse is too strong—it is not common to quote a novel in a theological review; but Miss Edgeworth's novels are works to be quoted any where, and we are tempted to give the words, which she puts into the mouth of one of her most excellent characters. '*Strong*—very strong! I am glad of it—the delicate, guarded, qualifying, trimming, mincing mode of speaking truth makes no sort of impression. Truth should always be strong, speaking or acting.'

Still there are those on whose attention we should not press this discourse. There are minds in which the best and most beautiful affections have clustered round a system of faith, many parts of which may seem to us erroneous. Of the doctrines which they have been taught and have received, the heart has elected, and incorporated with itself, only those which tend to good. What is false and pernicious lies inert, and almost unregarded. But still it is a part of their faith; and there is danger of giving useless pain, doubt, or anxiety; or perhaps of shaking and weakening the whole system of belief in such minds, by any attempt to remove it. Their habits of thinking and feeling are foreign from such discussions. In a

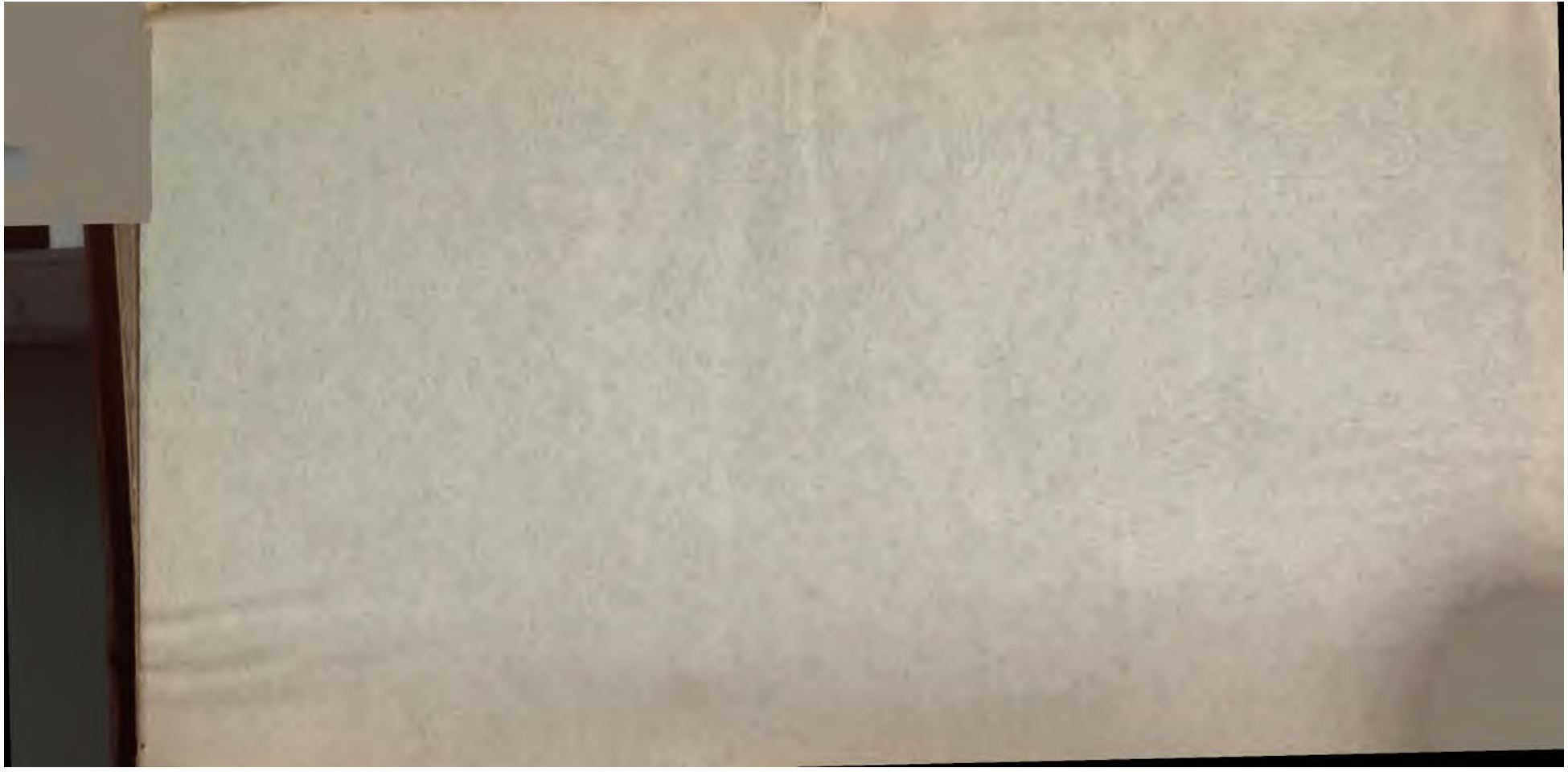
struggle for all that is most valuable, we would not force the infirmity of age, or female delicacy, or natural weakness, into the conflict, though we delight in believing that they will enjoy the fruits of the victory. We are not anxious to make proselytes, but to make Christians; and if the superstructure of true christian excellence has been raised upon whatever doctrines, we are satisfied. We have no wish to disturb it, in order to provide what we may think a far better and more secure foundation.

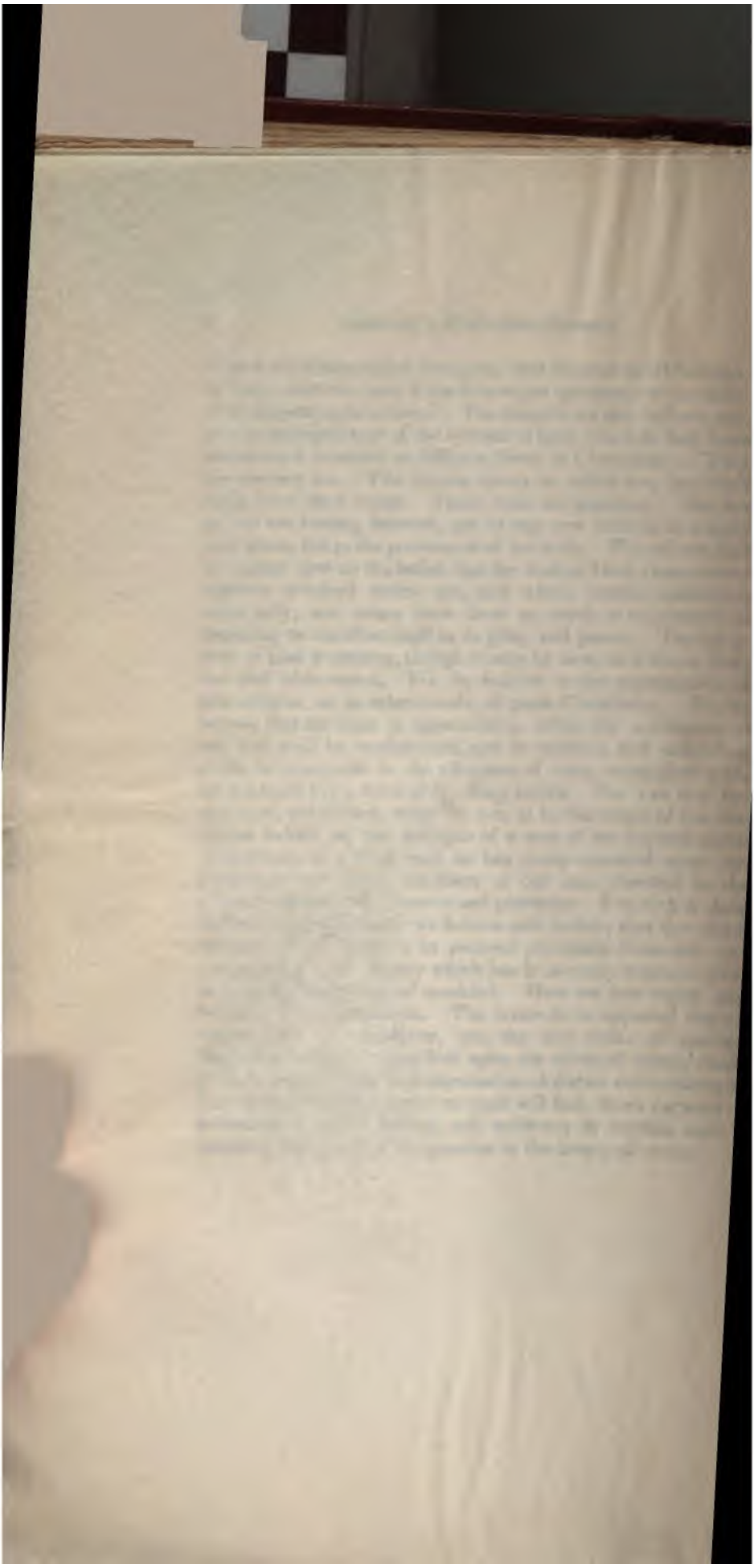
But though we would not, in individual cases, assail false opinions, accidentally innocent, and which are guarded by sacred and dear associations, yet let it not be thought that we are wanting in a deep feeling of the noxiousness of those religious errors, which have so long prevailed, in their general operation. We may illustrate our meaning. Though one would not disturb the devotions of a sincere Catholic, kneeling, full of gratitude and adoration,

> 'Where holiest Mary bends,
> In virgin beauty, o'er her blessed babe—
> A sight that almost to idolatry
> Might win the soul by love;'

yet who would think that Luther and his followers ought to have been more considerate and reserved in opposing the papal abuses, and the whole hierarchy by which they were supported; or to have thrown themselves with less spirit into the breach, where the battle of the civilized world was to be fought? The religious reformation which is now going on, though very different in its character from that of the sixteenth century, is one of not less importance. The world is so far in advance of the false systems of doctrine which have existed under the name of Christianity, that they are losing all hold upon the minds of intelligent men. This is still more true of other countries than our own. The established faith of every nation in Europe, is regarded, by a great majority of the more intelligent classes, at best with nothing more than an outward show of respect as a part of the political system; sometimes kept out of view with decent indifference, and respectful silence, and sometimes assailed with open or indirect expressions of unbelief and scorn. Yet in most minds the established faith is identified with Christianity. Religion has thus been abandoned to very weak expositors and defenders; men better fitted to render it an object of doubt and ridicule, than to vindicate its character. We have heard it quoted as the

remark of a distinguished foreigner, 'that the wheels of Christianity were worn out, and it was time to get up some new machinery to operate upon society.' The remark, we may believe, was in a great degree true of the systems of faith, which he had been accustomed to regard as different forms of Christianity. They are wearing out. The human errors in which they had their origin have died away. Their roots are perishing. But for us, we are looking forward, not to any new delusion to supply their place, but to the prevalence of the truth. We will not, and we cannot give up the belief, that the work of God, commenced eighteen hundred years ago, and which human ignorance, error, folly, and crime have done so much to counteract, is beginning to manifest itself in its glory and power. The kingdom of God is coming, though it may be now, as it was at first, not with observation. We do believe in the regeneration of true religion, or, in other words, of pure Christianity. We do believe that the time is approaching, when the evidences of our faith shall be unobscured, and its sublime and ennobling truths be presented to the affections of men, unmingled with, unconcealed by, a mass of revolting errors. Nor can this belief seem unfounded, when we see, as in the author of the discourse before us, the example of a man of the highest order of intellect, of a mind such as has rarely operated upon the intellectual and moral condition of our race, devoted to the cause of human improvement and goodness. It is with a deep and solemn interest, that we believe still further, that the restoration of true religion is to proceed principally from our own country; from that country which has in so many respects given an example to the rest of mankind. Here we now enjoy perfect freedom of discussion. The errors to be opposed are not incorporated, as elsewhere, into the very frame of society. Here religion has a strong hold upon the minds of many, ready to learn, and anxious to understand its character and evidences. And here it has found, and we trust will find, those capable of defending it, of explaining and enforcing its truths, and of revealing them in all their splendor to the hearts of men.





THE

# LIBERAL PREACHER:

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OF

## SERMONS

BY

## LIVING MINISTERS.

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EDITED BY
REV. T. R. SULLIVAN,
KEENE, N. H.

*For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.*—Isaiah lxii. 1.

*And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*—I. Cor. xiii. 13.

*Charity rejoiceth in the truth.*—I. Cor. xiii. 6.

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# SERMON V.

By ANDREWS NORTON,

DEXTER PROFESSOR OF SACRED LITERATURE IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

## *ON THE CHANGE OF CHARACTER IN MEN SPOKEN OF IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, AS PRODUCED BY CHRISTIANITY.*

JOHN III. 3. EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

THE object of the following discourse is to explain this declaration of our Saviour, and other corresponding declarations, made by him and his apostles. The passages in question relate to the great moral and intellectual change necessary in the generality of Jews and Gentiles, in order to their becoming sincere disciples of Christ; and to the great change in the condition of the world produced by Christianity.

When we compare the common character and expectations of the Jews with the circumstances in which Jesus Christ appeared, the requisitions and spirit of his religion, and the prospect which he opened to his followers, it will appear that a moral and intellectual change, the most extraordinary, was necessary for a Jew to become a Christian. He was to relinquish his hope of a conquering and triumphant Messiah, and to take for his master a poor man of humble origin, whose claims were rejected with scorn and hatred by the interpreters of the law and the rulers of the people. He had expected a leader who should confer upon his followers power, wealth, and splendor. In becoming a follower of Jesus Christ, he was to join himself to one who

had not where to lay his head; whose invitation was, "If any man will come after me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"; that is, let him follow me as on the way to crucifixion; and whose promises were, "Ye shall be hated by all men for my sake." "He who killeth you will think he is offering a sacrifice to God." The Jews had been expecting a dispensation by which God, delivering them from their oppressors, would bestow new and magnificent distinctions upon them, his chosen people. He who claimed to be their Messiah had come to announce to them the displeasure of God, to call them to reformation, and to treat as vile and hypocritical, those whom they held in the highest honor. The blessings which he brought were to be offered equally to the Gentiles as to themselves. Instead of a deliverer of his people, he proclaimed that their habitation was to be left by them desolate. The hope of Israel had come to denounce punishment and destruction. There was an utter discordance between the character of the new dispensation, and every thing which they had expected. If a Jew who felt strongly the passions and hopes common to his countrymen, could have been made to comprehend at once its character, objects, and effects, in relation to the Jewish people, we can hardly conceive of what must have been the revolt of his feelings, his amazement, and horror.

But to this dispensation, the Jew who became a disciple of our Saviour, was to be gradually reconciled. Nor was this all. He was not merely to relinquish those expectations which had been handed down, as the most precious inheritance, from father to son, and which had been his solace and his pride, to eradicate his national and religious prejudices and antipathies, to recognize the justice of the punishment and destruction of his people, to close his eyes upon all those views of personal aggrandizement with which he might have become a follower of Jesus Christ, and to prepare himself for self-denial, a life of suffering, and a violent death; he was, at the same time, to acquire a new moral and religious character. The religion of the Jews in the time of Christ was generally a matter of pride and ostentation, of ritual ceremonies and superstitious observances. It exhibited that worst form of false

religion which grows up with men's vices, receiving strength from them, and imparting strength in return. But the mind of the Jew who became a convert to Christ, was to be pervaded by a new spirit. He had gloried in his knowledge of God, and in what he believed his peculiar relation to him, but he was now to form much nobler, and more correct conceptions of his character; he was to feel towards him much purer devotion and much stronger love; and this, at the very time that he was learning to regard him no longer as the peculiar God of the descendants of Abraham; but about to cast them off from his favor, to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. His passions had been engrossed by the objects of this world; and he had possessed only some indistinct and erroneous belief respecting the future life, which had operated but little on his heart or conduct. He was now to acquire a new principle, which should supercede or control every other, the principle of faith, the habitual consideration of the invisible and the remote. Under its influence he was called upon to triumph over the dread of suffering and of death, and to regard every thing here as unworthy to be compared with that great reward in heaven, of which the promises of his master alone gave him assurance. He was called to the habitual practice of a virtue he had never dreamt of, one of which ancient philosophy in her best days had formed but imperfect conceptions, the virtue of Christian charity. He was to become a follower of that master who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister;" he was no longer to consider how much good he could possess himself of, but how much good he could communicate; he was no longer to regard himself as an insulated individual who might pursue his distinct interests with no other care than not to encroach upon the rights of others; he was now to view his interests as blended with the interests of all around him. He was not merely to forget that pride, and those resentments which had formed a barrier between him and the rest of mankind; he was to be ready, if summoned to that high office, to go forth, as a minister of the religion which he professed, to urge the acceptance of its blessings upon all men, idolaters, sinners, and Gentiles; to serve the injurious, to conciliate the insulting, and to recognize in an enemy, and

a persecutor, only an erring fellow-creature, capable of being reformed and benefited.

I do not suppose that the Christian character was completely attained by all, or by a great majority of converts to our religion. But the character which I have described was proposed for attainment by Jesus Christ, however imperfectly his requisitions might be sometimes understood, or however imperfectly they might be complied with. In every sincere convert to his religion, a great change necessarily took place; and by some, we believe by apostles, and by martyrs, a degree of religious and moral excellence was attained, which has justly rendered them in all succeeding times objects of admiration and reverence.

The change required in the Gentiles in order to their becoming Christians, was certainly not less than that demanded of Jews. A few individuals of a nation separated from the rest of the world, and regarded with dislike and scorn, individuals, rude in speech, expressing themselves in language which seemed barbarous to those whom they addressed, and with conceptions to which they were wholly unaccustomed, came among them to speak of a Jewish Messiah, of God, of man's nature and responsibility, and of immortal life. They came to give true notions of the Divinity to idolaters, to communicate religion in all its spirituality to those whose nominal religion was an affair of this world, rather affording occasions for licentious indulgence, than operating as any restraint upon the passions and appetites. They came to discourse of sin and righteousness to men ignorant of the meaning of such terms, in the sense in which they are used by a Christian. They came to teach mere creatures of this life to feel and act as heirs of eternity. Their converts were separated from their former pursuits, pleasures, and companions; to form a new class of men whose striking peculiarities were continually exposing them to remark and insult. Heathens, to whom this world had been all, were to be detached from it, to look upon it as passing away, to rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and to weep as though they wept not.

When we bring together the conceptions which we derive from heathen authors of the character, the manner of life,

the prevailing sentiments, the modes of thinking, the motives, the passions, and the vices, of the heathen inhabitants of Rome or of Corinth, and then turn to the New Testament, and form a just notion of the character which was required in a Christian, we perceive that human nature is presented under two aspects, which may at first view appear to have almost nothing in common. Think of an apostle, of St. Paul, as entering Corinth ; and picture to yourself, not the first Corinthian church, of which you may have formed an idea from his epistles ; but Corinth such as it is described by the writers of Greece and Rome. There is not, in the proper sense of the words, a religious association with that city in your mind. It was a place of great trade, wealthy, luxurious, and noted for its dissoluteness. It was beautiful and magnificent with the works of Grecian art. It presented on every side something to remind one of what a modern writer* has called," the cheerful devotion, the elegant forms, and agreeable fictions" of Grecian superstition. The games in honor of Neptune were celebrated in its neighborhood ; and the splendid brothel, called the temple of Venus, was just without its walls. It abounded in libraries, schools, and sophists. It was distinguished by a corrupt and effeminate literature. Recur now to the conception we may justly form of St. Paul, and think of him as entering this city to announce the realities of religion, the duties, and the hopes of men, and as there collecting one of these societies of Christian converts, which were the first fruits, and the pledges of the moral regeneration of mankind. It requires a strong effort to blend together these discordant conceptions, and to form an imagination of what we know to be an historical fact. The change of character which was actually effected, first in the Jewish, and afterwards in the Gentile converts, is beyond comparison the most extraordinary moral phenomenon in the history of mankind. When we have formed a just notion of it, we shall not wonder for a moment at the metaphors by which it was described, as a change from darkness into marvellous light, as a new birth, as a resurrection from the dead, and as a new creation.

But in explaining the language of scripture, which implies

* Gibbon.





that a great revolution was taking place in the moral world, we are to consider not merely the change required and produced by Christianity in those individuals who were its first converts; we are to consider also the great change which this new dispensation of God was to effect in the condition of mankind. The period which the Jews had denominated the coming age, denoting by that phrase the reign of their Messiah, had arrived. The kingdom of heaven which had been so long before the subject of prophecy, and which had been so long waited for, was about to be established. It was indeed a dispensation of a very different kind from what the Jews had expected, but one of a far higher character. The appointed time was fulfilled, and the God of the universe was revealing his will and purposes to his creatures of this world. Moral and intellectual darkness covered the earth; and God said, Let there be light, and there was light. He was calling men to reformation and virtue; he was teaching them his own character, and their immortal destiny, disclosing new hopes the most joyful, and presenting new *motives* the most powerful, and opening new sources of human improvement. The laws of nature were suspended in their course to bear testimony to the truth of his minister; and, amid the most splendid attestations to its divine authority, a religion was introduced, which, impeded and counteracted, as its effects have been by the vices and follies of its professed disciples, has yet exerted a vast influence to change for the better the condition of man, to ennoble the human character, to give the ascendancy to what is moral and intellectual in our nature, to establish and give efficacy to correct notions of social duty, to connect men together by sympathies before unknown; and, above all, to teach them to regard themselves, not as creatures all whose interests are bounded by the hopes and fears of this life, but as immortal beings; a religion which gave to all by whom it was received, excepting the Jews, a knowledge of their God, and which unites all its faithful disciples to him by affections that, in the heathen world at least, had scarcely been felt before its introduction. It was with reference to the effects that Christianity is adapted to produce, which it was producing, and which it was foreseen that it would produce, that its establishment is spo-

ken of as the regeneration. "In the regeneration," says our Saviour, "when the Son of Man shall set on the throne of his glory." "Old things have passed away," says St. Paul, "behold all things have become new." The kingdom of God, of heaven, of Christ was establishing. It was by these metaphors, that the new dispensation was denoted. And in correspondence with them, and in conformity to the boldness of oriental and prophetic imagery, Christ represents himself as just about to assume his kingdom with the glorious power of the Father, accompanied by the angels, to execute the laws which he had given. "There are some," he says, "standing here who shall not taste death, till they see the Son of Man coming as a king." To enter the kingdom of heaven was to acknowledge the divine authority of Christ, to submit to his laws, in the hope of those glorious rewards which he made known, and thus to enjoy the blessings which he came to confer.

We have seen what character was required to enter this kingdom. Christ came to call sinners to reformation. It was reformation which was preached by his forerunner, the Baptist. "Now in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the deserts of Judea, and saying; Reform, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "*Reform*"—it is thus that the word in the original ought to be rendered, and not "*Repent*," as it is in the common version. The primary idea expressed by *repentance*, is merely sorrow for one's past conduct; the primary idea expressed by *reformation*, is a change from a bad moral state to a good one. It was the necessity of the latter and not of the former, except so far as the former is connected with the latter, that John meant to inculcate. The substitution of the words *repent* and *repentance* throughout the common version of the New Testament, instead of the proper expressions, *reform* and *reformation*, has had a tendency to produce and confirm false notions respecting the requisitions of religion. It has led men to believe, that there is an efficacy in mere sorrow for past sins, which we are, in fact, no where taught by Christianity that it has; and to connect with it, an expectation of all the consequences which belong only to sincere, and thorough reformation. Thorough reformation, when any considerable part of life has been

misspent, must commonly be the labor of years; but men have been weak enough to fancy that all its benefits might be enjoyed by the exercise of a certain degree of sorrow during a few hours or a few days, and those too, perhaps, among the last of an immoral and irreligious life. Mere sorrow for past sins is of no value nor importance, except so far as it may tend to prevent their repetition, or in some other way conduce to reformation. It is true that theologians will tell us, that in their idea of repentance is included a change of affections and conduct, and that they understand this change to be expressed by the word when used in our common version of the New Testament. But the idea of this change, as I have before said, is not included in the primary meaning of the word, nor is it brought distinctly to the minds of the generality of the readers by its use. Even in most theological systems, partly from the use of this word, and partly from other causes, sorrow for past sins has been elevated to a a rank to which it is not entitled; and too little has been said about the necessity of reformation in connexion with it.

Indeed a great deal too much efficacy may be attributed to reformation as well as repentance. There is a very wide difference between the sins of men who are in such a state as those to whom our Saviour and his Apostles preached, the sins of men who have been educated in very imperfect and very erroneous notions both of religion and morality, and who are surrounded by examples of depravity, and the sins of those who enjoy or who may enjoy the knowledge and the privileges of Christians. "I obtained mercy," says St. Paul, "because I acted ignorantly, in unbelief." "The times of past ignorance," he tells the Athenians, "God overlooked;" and we find other language to the same effect both of our Saviour and his Apostles. There are few truths of more importance to be early impressed upon the mind, than that many of the consequences of our conduct are irretrievable; that if we have chosen ill, we must not indeed abide by our choice, but we must suffer its effects, and that we may cause much evil to ourselves and others, which no future tears will wash away, and no future exertions will remedy.

From the preaching of John the Baptist, I proceed to

that of our Saviour. He also, like his forerunner, commenced with the preaching of reformation. "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Reform, for the kingdom of heaven draws near." In his sermon on the mount, the change of moral character required by the new dispensation, was clearly exhibited in the contrast which he made through a considerable part of this discourse between the precepts given by him, and the rules of morality to which they had been accustomed; between the words that he said unto them, and the words that they had heard as having been "said by them of old time." Other portions of this discourse afford a contrast less obviously brought out, but in itself not less striking, between the exhortations and commands of our Saviour, and the opinions, dispositions, and purposes of those whom he addressed.

We will pass to our Saviour's remarkable conversation with Nicodemus, which occured at Jerusalem, at the first passover which he attended after the commencement of his ministry. Nicodemus undoubtedly came to our Saviour possessed with the Jewish notions respecting the Messiah. That Jesus was the Messiah, he could hardly have felt assured. He was wavering, probably, between the impression made by his miracles, which inclined him to believe that he was, and the doubts excited by his origin, by the circumstances of his life, and by his not openly assuming the character. He appears fully to have believed that he was a teacher from God. His objects in visiting our Saviour, beside a natural curiosity to listen to his private declarations, if he were nothing more than a divine teacher, probably were to ascertain the extent of his claims, and to propitiate his favor, if he were indeed the long expected deliverer and king; so that he might be thus early numbered among his friends, and obtain a large share in those honors and rewards which Nicodemus believed him, if in truth he were the Messiah, about to dispense. He came to him however by night, not willing to expose himself to the obloquy and hazard of openly professing respect for one on whom no other of the rulers or Pharisees believed. Manifesting, however, these fears, coming to our Saviour with the purposes which he probably had, and holding the com-





mon notions, and possessed with the common feelings of the Jews, his state of mind was very different from that which Jesus required in his disciples. The design, therefore, of the first part of our Saviour's conversation with him, as recorded by St. John, was, to announce the necessity of that renovation of character, the nature of which I have endeavoured to explain. The part to which I refer may be thus rendered, a little differently from the manner in which it is in the common version.

"There was a Pharisee, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to him; Rabbi, we know that thou hast come as a teacher from God; for no one can perform the wonderful works which thou dost, unless God be with him. Jesus answered him; Truly, truly, I say to thee, unless a man be born again he cannot behold the kingdom of God. Nicodemus says to him; How can a man be born who has grown old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered him; Truly, truly I say to thee, unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh, is flesh, and what is born of the spirit, is spirit. Wonder not that I said to thee, Ye must be born again. The spirit is like the wind, which blows where it will, and thou hearest its sound, but knowest not whence it comes, and whither it goes; thus is every one born, who is born of the spirit. Nicodemus answered him, How can these things be? Jesus answered him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?"

Our Saviour says to Nicodemus, "unless a man be born again, he cannot behold the kingdom of God." The general meaning of these words is explained by what has been already remarked; but there is further, I conceive, a particular allusion in them to a prejudice which strongly possessed the minds of the Jews. They believed that by birth, as natural descendants of Abraham, they were entitled to the favor of God, and the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom. They regarded themselves, and the proselytes to their religion, who as such became incorporated with their nation, as the exclusive objects of the promises made to

Abraham. It was in opposition to this error, that John the Baptist in announcing the kingdom of heaven, and calling them to reformation, warned them not to say in their hearts, "We are Abraham's children; as if this afforded a security that they should receive new favors from God upon the coming of the Messiah. It was in reference likewise to the same prejudice, that the evangelist John, in the commencement of his Gospel, in a passage which illustrates the words of our Saviour, speaks of the followers of Christ as being "born not of any particular race,* nor through the will of the flesh, nor through the will of man, but of God." Our Saviour teaches Nicodemus that no one, in consequence of his being born a Jew, would enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of Heaven; but, on the contrary, that the Jew must be born again; that a change was required in him which this metaphor well described.

Nicodemus, it is probable, had some imperfect conception of the meaning of our Saviour; but his mind revolted from it. He could not bring himself to believe that a Jew must undergo an entire change, and that he must become the disciple of a new religion, in order to his partaking the benefits of that dispensation, which the Jews had expected as the last and most distinguished manifestation of God's favor to his chosen people. Rejecting, therefore, at once this sense of the words, Nicodemus recurs to their literal signification; and the import of his following question seems to have been this: Your words cannot mean what they seem to imply—What then is their meaning?—How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? He states the absurdity of the literal meaning, to lead our Saviour to explain himself further. Jesus answered, Truly, truly I say unto thee, unless a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." To be born of water was to be baptized as a proselyte to the new religion; and by this act to make public profession of being its disciple. He who did this was said *to be born of water*; because baptism was the outward sign of the commencement of his

* Thus the original is to be understood. John i. 12.

new life. By *being born of the spirit*, is meant having a new character formed through those good influences upon the mind, direct and indirect, of which God is the source. In the style of scripture, all good moral influences are referred to the Spirit of God. This Spirit, the invisible energy by which God is drawing men to goodness, is around us as well as within us. It does not merely operate upon the mind, in directly imparting light and strength; its power is to be felt in the works and providence of God, in our natural sentiments of right and wrong, in the events of life, and in all the truths, which revelation makes known to us. It is to be acknowledged in whatever enlarges our conceptions of duty, raises our affections, gives us strength to resist temptation, or animates us in any good purpose. In the passage before us, our Saviour, I conceive, had particular reference to the truths and motives of Christianity, as the means which God was employing to effect the moral renovation of men; and to those direct influences upon the mind which, as we believe, accompanied the reception of the Christian faith.

He proceeds to say, "What is born of the flesh, is flesh; and what is born of the spirit, is spirit." The flesh is perishable and mortal; it was regarded as vile, and considered by the Jews, in common with many ancient philosophers, as the source of moral corruption. What is spiritual, on the contrary, was regarded by them as excellent, pure, having, in itself, power and life. The meaning of our Saviour, therefore, was, that men, considered as destitute of those spiritual influences of which he had spoken, regarded merely as beings born into this world, were to be viewed as low in character, perishable, and sinful. Whether born as Jews or not, they could not be subjects of the kingdom of heaven. But, on the contrary, that they whose minds had been renovated by the spirit, were pure and excellent, possessing a principle of immortal life. The former class were like the flesh, the latter, like what is spiritual.

Our Saviour tells Nicodemus not to wonder at these declarations as if they were unintelligible or incredible. He then describes the manner in which the great change in men, of which he had spoken, was to be produced. He compares the operation of the spirit to the action of the wind.

This is done by an easy metaphor in the original, for the same word in Greek signifies both *spirit* and *wind*. But as we have no word in English which unites both these significations, or may suggest them together, it is necessary in a translation to convert the metaphor into a simile, in order to convey its meaning.

In the words referred to, the purpose of our Saviour was to declare that the change announced by him, was not to be the result of any great visible revolutions in the state of the world, such as the Jews had expected to attend the coming of the Messiah; but that, on the contrary, it was taking place through the operation of a new influence on the minds of men, an influence invisible as the wind; but like the wind, which *blows where it will*, not to be restrained; producing sensible effects, "*thou hearest its voice*;" and governed by such laws that its commencement and progress could not be clearly discerned, "*thou knowest not whence it comes nor whither it goes.*" The meaning of this passage is nearly the same with that of the answer given by Christ to the Pharisees, who asked him, "When the kingdom of God was to come?" He said, The kingdom of God is not coming with observable shew; neither shall men say, "Behold here, or behold there; for behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

I have thus noticed some of those passages, in the preaching of our Saviour and his apostles, which relate to the great change of character required in the first converts to his religion, and to the change which Christianity was to produce in the condition of the world. The manner in which these passages have been explained by many, affords a remarkable example of that erroneous mode of interpretation, which, neglecting the circumstances, however peculiar, to which our Saviour and his apostles had respect in their discourses, generalizes, if I may use the expression, the meaning of their language, and extends its direct application to all Christians in all ages. A great change of character was required in the first converts to Christianity; much greater, in the generality, than would now take place in the conversion of an uneducated Mahometan or heathen into a sincere and rational Christian because, among other reasons, the duties of the

first disciples of our Saviour were far higher, and more arduous, and their trials far more severe, than Christians, as such, are at the present day called to suffer and to perform. The necessity of this change was declared by our Saviour and his apostles; and in addressing the first believers it was spoken of as an event which had taken place. But this language, having been disjointed from its proper application, is supposed to have had reference to all believers in all future ages, to men born in Christian countries, and educated as Christians; and to declare and imply the necessity of an entire change of character, at some period of life, in every one, in order to his becoming a true Christian. This change has, further, been regarded as not in any degree to be effected by the individual who is the subject of it, but as produced by the immediate act of God. And in order to afford an occasion for it, it has been believed that men are born with natures so depraved and impotent, that before they are, figuratively speaking, born again, they are unable to perform what God requires them to do. The notion of such a change of character has, certainly, no support in the teaching of our Saviour and his apostles; and in a future age men will wonder, that in our times we had to contend against such opinions. They will especially wonder, that a system, of which such doctrines make a part, should have usurped the place of Christianity.

But there is another view to be taken of the subject we have been discussing. We have seen what a change of character was required in the first converts to Christianity. It was solely to effect this change, that the motives held out by Christ and his apostles were directed. The only object of his ministry or theirs was, "to purify a peculiar people zealous for good works," made free by the truth, trusting in God with filial devotion and love, rejoicing in the midst of persecution and affliction, and separate in their habits, hopes, and purposes from the world around them. The great principle in the formation of this new class of men, that which was relied upon to produce this new aspect of human nature, was faith; or such a practical belief in "things unseen and eternal," as should make their influence prevail over "things seen and temporal." The motives appealed to were all drawn from

our relations to God and to eternity. "Blessed are ye," said our Saviour, "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." But how was the principle of faith to be brought into operation? How were the affections and hopes of Jews and Gentiles to be wrenched from the objects of this life, and fixed upon those of eternity? How were they to be purified, elevated, and changed into new creatures? Certainly, by no agency or means which could have been used by a small number of Jews, unless God had been with them. Certainly, the design of "this work was of God and not of men." Certainly, the character of our religion, viewed in contrast with the character of those to whom it was addressed, and the effects which we know it produced, demand the belief of its miraculous origin, and of all those displays of miraculous power which are recorded of Christ and his apostles.

I will observe but on one more topic. It is true that there is no ground for regarding men at the present day as, all, proper subjects of a change similar to that which took place in the first converts to Christianity; and still less are we to suppose the necessity of a change of man's nature as it is formed by God. But there are, without doubt, many, in every Christian country, whose religious and moral state is wholly unlike that required by our religion. To them the words of our Saviour may be applied in all their force, "Unless ye be born again, ye cannot behold the kingdom of God." The subject is a most serious one, but this is not the place to enlarge upon it. For ourselves, if, through the blessing of God, and that parental care, which is the most striking emblem of his providence, our minds have unfolded under the constant influence of Christianity, still we have much to do. The duty of continual improvement is one of which we shall feel the obligation, in proportion to the advances we have made. "I forget," said the chief of the apostles, "the things which are behind, and press forward to those which are before."

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*From Professor Estabrook, of Amherst Collegiate Institution, Sept.* 1823

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# REVIEW

OF

# F. NORTON'S REASONS.

(12)

# REVIEW

OF

Andrews

## PROF. NORTON'S STATEMENT

OF

## REASONS FOR NOT BELIEVING

THE

## DOCTRINES OF TRINITARIANS,

CONCERNING THE

## NATURE OF GOD AND THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

By George Barrell Cheever

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE
**QUARTERLY CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR,**
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BOSTON:
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1833.

# REVIEW, &c.

In the appearance of this volume, we have another significant token, that Unitarianism, on this side of the Atlantic as well as on the other, is rapidly fulfilling the predictions of the friends of the bible. It is advancing, in the full blazonry of unbelief, to destruction. It was necessary that before its final death-struggle, it should for a while assume its true character; as the Evil Spirits are said, in God's word, to have torn the men possessed, before they came out. Here is another stride towards the gloomy gulf of open infidelity; and this volume might more appropriately have been entitled, *A statement of Reasons why Unitarians ought to be considered as Infidels and not Christians.* We are glad on the whole, that the work of making this statement, has fallen into the hands of so genuine a Neologist, and rejecter of God's word, as Professor Norton. We call him a rejecter of God's word; nor will our readers esteem the phrase inappropriate, if they open his book, and behold the cool indifference, with which he strikes out epistle after epistle from the sacred canon, whenever its richness and fullness of "heavenly places in Christ Jesus," are too powerfully contrasted with the meager, death-like phantom of his own "Reasons for not believing." He has treated the bible, and the character of Jesus with such cool, anatomizing infidelity, that all but those initiated and confirmed in the heathen irreligion of the sect, must, we think, be startled into salutary reflection. Such, if we are rightly informed, is already the case with some; and we hope the extent of infidelity, to which he has proceeded in his "Statement," may prove the means of awakening to a conviction of their error a multitude of others, who have hitherto slumbered in the dreadful delusion of Unitarianism.

It is by no means our intention to review this book in detail. As an attack on the doctrine of the trinity, it contains nothing in the way of argument, which is likely to disturb the faith of any intelligent believer. But like most of Mr. Norton's productions, it is marked by a tone of insolence and contempt towards the great body of the christian public, which not only justifies, but demands the very plain language which we mean to use, in exposing the real nature and tendency of his speculations. As a specimen of the language which he thinks it decent to adopt, we select the following passage from many of a similar kind. "In urging such obvious arguments as these there is a humiliating consciousness of the weakness of the cause we are opposing. One may

feel as if he were wasting reasoning upon a subject unworthy of it; as if his remarks implied a want of common intelligence in his readers; as if he were exposed to the same ridicule, as he who should gravely and earnestly labor the proof of an undeniable proposition." p. 214.

When one or two more volumes like this shall have issued from the mint of modern Unitarianism, with prefaces that have the unblushing impudence to assert in the face of all the intelligent world, that the great doctrine of the trinity has become obsolete, and that "an allusion to it, occurring in any discussion, written or oral, not purely sectarian, would be regarded as a trait of fanaticism;"—when our American literature shall be infested with a few more such volumes, pretending in all our shops to be the only safe remedy extant against infidelity, and under pretense of making the bible a book which infidels can believe, destroying all its spirituality and undermining our confidence in its sacred authority,—it will then be time for another work like that of Leland on the Deistical Writers, to come forth on a similar expedition and crush them at a grasp. Mr. Norton himself promises to enrich the precious collection in the "*hortus siccus* of dissent," by the publication of his own attack, (which he partly concocted long since, and perhaps will finish speedily, that the world may be rid of one great obstacle in the way of the doctrine of the trinity's becoming 'obsolete,') on the canonical authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Perhaps also he will live to furnish the world with the evidence of his opinion, that the second epistle of Peter, is not the work of that apostle. It may be, moreover, that in his anxiety to relieve all men's consciences as well as his own, of the unwarrantable burden of divine truth, which has so long weighed upon them, he may enlighten us with the grounds of his belief, that the Apocalypse is not the work of St. John. After all this is accomplished, the author of the "Statement of Reasons for *not* believing," will perhaps have discovered some convenient mode of shuffling the first eighteen verses of the first chapter of the gospel of John, among his list of *passages interpolated or corrupted.* He has already exhibited an ingenuity of translation which would put Gilbert Wakefield himself to the blush, and may perhaps suggest to the minds of some of the sect, the expediency of an improved version, even of the Improved Version itself. If he could succeed in putting the ban of interpolation and corruption on these troublesome words of the beloved disciple, it would certainly be as plausible a process, as that hitherto unheard of resort, the use of the English word *power*, as a translation of the Greek word LOGOS! Admirable specimen of Exegesis! It is outdone, however, in several instances in this same volume. Indeed the eagerness with which the Unitarians have thrown themselves into the unbounded field of gratuitous conjecture, speculation, insertions, and alterations at will, in the interpretation of the scrip-

tures, would of itself be enough to throw strong suspicion on a theological system which needs to be bolstered up by such miserable support.

Before the author of the "Statement of Reasons for not believing," shall be able to enlighten the public in regard to the propriety, intelligence, politeness, and excellence of unbelief, (in regard to its innocency they have already been instructed and liberalized) Unitarianism in this country, we believe, will have shared the fate of Unitarianism in England; and in speaking of it we shall have to use the language of the author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm.

"Were it asked how far the Socinian error *now* checks the promulgation and progress of the gospel, it would be impossible to make so small a matter palpable in our reply. To affirm that the great principles of religion are at present endangered by the feeble and expiring remains of Socinianism, were much the same as to say, that the throne and constitution of Britain is in jeopardy by the lurking attachment of the people to the house of Stuart!"

"The contrary is the fact. We are strengthened by the puny heresy, that yet gasps here and there about us. The modern history, the fate, and the present actual condition of the doctrine absurdly called Unitarianism, is quite enough to convince any man of sense, that the sceptical argument is a mere sophism, even if he knew nothing of the merits of the question. And this edifying history and spectacle, does in fact produce a proper effect upon the minds of men, and does actually seal the theological argument as it ought. Is Unitarianism christianity? Read the story of its rise in modern times, of its progress and decay, and look at the meager phantom as it now haunts the dry places it has retired to! Is this pitiful shadow christianity?"

From Professor Norton's preface, notwithstanding our remembrance of such names as Bacon, and Boyle, Hale, Mackintosh and Hall, we should certainly be led to think, that there never was, nor can now be found, an intelligent Trinitarian in existence; and that "all the departments of polite literature, moral science, and natural religion" have, by common consent, been baptized into the liberalizing and vapid negations of Unitarianism. On this point, a sentence from Burke will commend itself to our readers. "Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern, make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadows of the British oak, chew their cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that of course they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little shrivelled, meager, hopping, though loud and troublesome, insects of the hour." If Mr. Norton wishes to find one of the earliest notices of his own sect in "any department of polite literature," we suggest for his consideration, Burke's speech on the petition of the Unitarians; es-





pecially that passage of it which contains the following sentence: "This is the first time that our records of parliament have had, or our experience or history given, an account of any religious congregation or association, known by the name which these petitioners have assumed." It is curious to observe that at this early period, the elements of Unitarian zeal were as clearly analyzed as they can be even now. "It is somewhat remarkable" says Burke in the Reflections on the Revolution, speaking of Dr. Price, "that this reverend divine should be so earnest for setting up new churches, and so perfectly indifferent concerning the doctrine which may be taught in them. His zeal is of a curious character. It is not for the propagation of his own opinion, but of *any* opinions. It is not for the diffusing of truth, but for the spreading of contradiction. Let the noble teacher but dissent, and it is no matter from whom or from what. This great point once secured, it is taken for granted their religion will be rational and manly."

Their religion Robert Hall has admirably described as "an *exhausting* process." "It consists in affirming, that the writers of the new testament were *not*, properly speaking, inspired, nor infallible guides in divine matters; that Jesus Christ did *not* die for our sins, nor is the proper object of worship, nor even impeccable; that there is *not* any provision made in the sanctification of the Spirit for the aid of spiritual weakness, or the cure of spiritual maladies; that we have *not* an intercessor at the right hand of God; that Christ is *not* present with his saints, nor his saints when they quit the body, present with the Lord; that man is *not* composed of a material and immaterial principle; but consists merely of organized matter, which is totally dissolved at death. To look for elevation of moral sentiment from such a series of pure negations, would be to gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles,—to extract sunbeams from a cucumber."

To this statement of "*not* believing," this catalogue of negations, we may add from the volume before us, that Jesus Christ did *not* exist before he was born into this world, or in other words, that he was *not* really before Abraham, that he had *not* glory with the Father before the world was, (p. 169–75;) that He has *not* now any superintendence over the concerns of his followers, (p. 163;) that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is *not* there in the midst of them, (p. 159;) that the examples of prayer to Christ in the new testament can *not* be considered as affording any example or authority for prayer to Christ under ordinary circumstances, (p. 160;) that he is *not* personally present with his disciples, (p. 163;) that he has *not* gone to prepare a place for them, (p. 202;) that he is *not* the judge of all, (p. 212;) that he will *not* personally come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels, to render to every man according to his deeds, (p. 204;) that His language respecting his own future coming and judgment

of men, was *not* understood by his own apostles, (p. 212;) that this language is a scenical representation, (p. 212;) that the apostles taught gross errors, "St. Paul had fallen into a mistake," (p. 300;) that Paul did *not* write the Epistle to the Hebrews; that Peter did *not* write the second of his own Epistles; that John did *not* write the Apocalypse; that the christianity of revelation does *not* teach men any truths which they might not learn from mere natural religion; and to all this we may add, the explicit declaration of Mr. Norton elsewhere, "*that the canonical books of the new testament are* NOT *the revelation which God made by Christ.*" The volume that contains such negations, in the form of Statements for not Believing, deserves, better than the Deist Tindal's book, the title "*Christianity as old as the Creation.*" Deism, as distinguished from Atheism, Robert Hall remarks truly, embraces almost every thing which the Unitarians profess to believe.

And now our readers may be ready to ask, 'In the name of all that is sacred, what *do* they believe, after having rejected such an accumulation of revealed truth?' We will let Professor Norton stand at the bar, and make his solemn answer.

"Christianity, WE BELIEVE, has taught men to know God, and has revealed him as the Father of his creatures. It has made known his infinite perfections, his providence, and his moral government. It has directed us to look up to Him as the Being, on whom we and all things are entirely dependent, and to look up to Him with perfect confidence and love. It has made known to us that we are to live forever; it has brought life and immortality to light. Man was a creature of this earth, and it has raised him to a far nobler rank, and taught him to regard himself as an immortal being, the child of God. It calls the sinner to reformation and hope. It affords to virtue the highest possible sanctions. It gives to sorrow its best, and often, its only consolation. It presents us, in the life of our great Master, with an example of that moral perfection, which is to be the constant object of our exertions. It has established the truths which it teaches upon evidence the most satisfactory. It is a most glorious display of the Deity, and of his care for the beings of this earth. It has lifted the veil which separated God from his creatures, and this life from eternity." pp. 289, 290.

Here is the creed of Unitarians: let all the world hear. They say WE BELIEVE! In the very Statement of Reasons for not Believing, they have at length uttered a believing affirmation! The oracle has spoken.

"Leave, oh leave me, to repose!"

And what has it spoken? Most lame and impotent conclusion! Not one solitary syllable in regard to a SAVIOR, nor the most distant intimation that in all God's plan there *is* one! If we could not select from the works of Plato, a creed at least equal in richness and elevation of sentiment, and more nearly approximating to

divine truth, we are sadly mistaken. We say, *more nearly approximating to divine truth*, for we could find in Plato no doubtful recognition of the truths of man's depravity, the malignity of sin, and the certainty of a future retribution. But these are things which Unitarians do not love to dwell upon. The shrinking soul, oppressed with a sense of guilt, looks round in anguish for a MEDIATOR between God and man; but the idea of a mediator, is one which the Unitarians seem perfectly to abhor. They thank God they can come into God's presence without a mediator. No wonder, then, that their system excludes every thing which would lead the soul to the conviction of its guilt, and the search for an atonement, and therefore every thing peculiar to the gospel;—the depravity of man, the infinite evil of sin, the great day of judgment, an Almighty Savior It would task the critical ingenuity of Professor Norton himself, to discover in this creed of Unitarianism, the slightest traces of these fundamental truths. Indeed, its poverty is such as Plato would have pitied, and the very Deist, in reference to its pretensions to have come from revelation, would scorn.

And yet this stale and lifeless creed, which Paine himself would probably have accepted without the slightest amelioration either in his intellect or heart, from which all mention of a Savior is studiously excluded, and which, even as an exposition of natural religion is ineffably weak and soul-less, this is the vaunted remedy for infidelity! This is to be substituted for Jesus Christ and him crucified, and offered to the expecting nations as the sole product of all the wonders of revelation! But no: we mistake: it will *not* be offered to the nations: Unitarianism has no missionaries, cannot support *one*. We are thankful that it is impossible for this delusion and the missionary spirit, to live together.

It is not strange that the admirers of this system think it will suit infidels. Voltaire himself would have received it as the only creed for a gentleman, ridiculing nothing about it but its pretensions to revelation. It *does* suit infidels. It *is* a creed which the unregenerate, unbelieving heart craves. Mr. Norton is perfectly right in believing, that when all the peculiar doctrines of the bible are blotted out, and its spirituality explained away, there will then no longer be infidels. True; there will be nothing left to disbelieve, nothing for infidelity to fasten on. There will no longer be any opportunity for exercising the power of dissent. And when this is the case, what will become of that religion whose whole existence is manifested in unbelief, and whose very creed consists in Statements of Reasons for not believing? The millennium of release from the bondage of orthodoxy, to which the Professor so devoutly aspires, will be the signal for the extinction of a sect that lives by disbelieving; since there will then be no proposition to reject or contend against, and therefore no one principle of union

or life. Other principle they have none, than that of negation. Antagonism to orthodoxy is their sole principle of vitality.

As we said before, we have no intention of examining this volume in detail, for it carries with it its own refutation. One or two points in its tenor we will touch upon, and then proceed to the consideration of some *principles*, of which every individual, who wishes to discover, and not to evade and do away, the meaning of the bible, must acknowledge the reasonableness and authority.

Mr. Norton's preparations to undeceive his readers in regard to those passages of scripture which directly contradict his theory, and which they have always been accustomed to interpret according to their plain meaning, are truly amusing. On every such occasion he is compelled to a preliminary movement, thus: In order to comprehend correctly the purport of this mistaken passage, we must consider—that it is very difficult to know what the bible does mean; that it is very liable to be misunderstood; that its expressions are figurative, and that their explanation is to be found in analagous metaphors, the meaning of which is obvious; and that, however bold some of them may appear, they do not transcend the genius of the oriental style. Or thus: We must not explain this passage literally, for if we did, it would teach the divinity of Christ, and this would "involve an absurdity, and a contradiction to what is elsewhere said by the Evangelist,;" wherefore, it is, "unquestionable," that the literal interpretation, "cannot be admitted." Or thus: It is very manifest that this passage cannot mean what its language evidently implies; for, it would be contrary to reason, and to all our preconceived notions of things: in order to know what it *does* mean, we must remember *the oriental forms of speech*, and put it into a metaphor. Or thus: We shall err here, if we do not bear in mind the peculiar philosophical views of the Jews, and their mistakes about the character of the Messiah. We must remember that they applied a great many passages from the old testament to Christ, and so did his own disciples and the apostles under his teaching, which ought not to have been so applied. Or thus; The passage we are now to consider, seems difficult, it is true; but we must remember that the apostles were liable to error, and this passage contains a mistake of theirs, which 'their Master,' being engaged about so many other things, had no time to correct. Or thus: We are not to suppose that in this passage the apostle intended to be understood according to his obvious meaning; his real meaning was probably this, etc. etc. etc.

Into all these awkward predicaments, the Unitarians are driven, not to explain, but to explain *away* God's word. They make the bible a book, which needs another revelation, to prevent us from understanding it according to its plain import. To all this laborious and perplexing array of "peculiar circumstances," and "Jewish errors," and "traditionary delusions," and dribblings of



*number of errors they taught, and the grossness of their misunderstanding of Christ's words.* Or, in other language, *In proportion as the Apostles mistook the Savior, and taught contrary to the truth, in that proportion they are worthy to be believed.*

We will here exhibit one or two additional examples of the manner in which Professor Norton explains *away* the scriptures. But first we will quote the following passage from the learned Titmann, in regard to *inept* interpretation. (Biblical Repository, No. iii. p. 459.)

"It is exhibited when a sentiment is obtruded upon a writer, which is alike foreign to his constant manner of speaking and thinking, and to his intention and object. As if one should say that Paul, in Eph. i: 7, *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*, had in mind the system of christian doctrine; and we should go on to interpret redemption through his blood, etc., of a deliverance from sin which is effected by this doctrine, confirmed by the death of Christ. Such interpretation is supported neither by the manner in which the apostle is accustomed to speak of the death of Christ, nor by the object of the writer, nor the method of the whole discussion, nor by the mode of thinking among the christians to whom the apostles wrote; unless the utmost violence be put upon the words."

We return to Mr. N. Christ says, Where two or three are met together in my name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM. Hear our expounder, "By the latter words our Savior did not mean to affirm that he would be present with them to hear their prayers, which would be inconsistent with the words preceding.–His purpose was to declare that the designs, labors, and prayers, in which his followers might unite for the promotion of his cause, would be *equally* blessed with his own."—p. 159. In another place, p. 202, 203. "By this our Savior intended that the prayers of his followers—would be granted *as if*—he himself were praying with them." Again, Paul exhorts the Colossians to forgive each other, "as Christ has forgiven them," Hear our expounder. "Not referring to any forgiveness from Christ in person."—p. 198. Again, Paul says, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Our expounder says, "Intending by those words to express the unchangeableness of christian truth."—p. 199. "In like manner, when he declares, that he has come "to save the world," he refers to *the power of his religion* in delivering men," etc.—p. 200. Again, "in my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." etc. Our expounder says of this precious promise, "When Jesus thus speaks of preparing a place for his disciples, and after preparation returning to take them with him,—the meaning is, Your future blessedness will be as great, and is as certain, *as if* it were prepared for you by me," etc. p. 202. Again, "The son of man shall come in the glory of his fa-

ther, with his holy angels, and then shall he render to every one according to his deeds." Hear our expounder, "Angels were conceived of by the Jews as ministers of God's providence; and Christ, *conforming his language to their conceptions*, repeatedly speaks of the ministry of angels, *figuratively*, to denote some manifestation of the power of God. Thus he tells Nathaniel, "Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man;" meaning, Ye shall witness manifest proof of the relation existing between God and me his minister. When our Savior speaks of his coming with the glory of God and his angels, he does not mean by these figures to express that he will himself appear in person," etc. p. 204. It is a gross and violent insult, thus to deal with the sacred volume.

We did not mean to tax the patience of our readers any farther; yet we cannot dismiss the volume without calling their attention, (should they meet with it,) to the passage from page 318 to 323, as containing one of the most presumptuous criticisms on the motives and teaching of our Savior, that we remember ever to have met with. Professor Norton does *not* believe in the existence and agency of fallen spirits. The apostles, he acknowledges, did; and the Lord Jesus sanctioned and confirmed this belief. Mr. Norton asks why he did this, when he must have known it was false!! He then goes on to answer, that "if he had taught the truth, he would immediately have been denounced by his enemies;" that their error on this point was connected with errors on many other subjects, in regard to which it was in vain for Christ to think of enlightening his ignorant and prejudiced hearers, which, however he must have done, had he attempted to teach them the truth in regard to the great point in question! Moreover, Mr. Norton thinks that in the cause of truth, "the language of error may be used, in order powerfully to affect the feelings;" and he represents Christ as doing this, our blessed Savior as sanctioning and confirming the errors of the Jews, "because no other modes of speech would have so powerfully affected their minds!!" He who is the way, the TRUTH, and the life, teaching error that good may come! The system which demands such speculations as these in its support, betrays its parentage at once: it is of its Father, the Devil.*

Mr. Norton remarks on the application by the Jews and the apostles, of many old testament predictions and types to the Messiah, "*One is surprised, perhaps, that this mistake was not corrected by Christ.*" "But would you have had him at the same

* In the following passage, we have one of the most striking exhibitions of the cold-blooded infidelity of Mr. Norton. "Supposing that Thomas had believed, and asserted, that his Master was God himself; *in what way should this affect our faith.?*" p. 226. The belief then of one of the disciples respecting an *essential* doctrine, and a declaration of that belief made publicly to Christ himself, and received by him with *marked approbation*, would have no influence to change the opinion of Mr. N.!! Could Paine have said more?

time teach the whole art of interpretation?" "To enable his hearers to become skillful expositors of the old testament," (our readers will bear in mind that Christ is declared to have expounded to the disciples, in all the scriptures, "the things concerning himself," and this was the way undoubtedly in which they became such *skillful expositors of the old testament,*) "he must have settled the yet disputed questions concerning the age, the authorship, the authority, and WHAT HAS BEEN CALLED the *inspiration*, of the different writings that compose it; and whoever has studied these subjects with an unbiased and inquiring mind, may, I think, be satisfied, that the truth concerning them is such, as no Jew was prepared to listen to, and few indeed would have listened to without astonishment and wrath," (p. 320.) Let our readers weigh the meaning of this latter sentence. We have marked the words *what has been called:* they convey to our minds another point in the declaration of Mr. Norton's creed of negatives, and that is, that the old testament is *not* inspired. The Jews firmly believed it was. Mr. Norton's views concerning it, which views he thinks, and rightly, our Lord did not teach, and for not teaching which he kindly undertakes to make an apology for Christ, are indeed such, as neither the Jews, nor the apostles, nor our Savior, would any of them have listened to without astonishment and indignation.

We will now proceed to mention a few principles of correct interpretation. They are *principles:* intimately connected with the state of the individuals own feelings; borrowing, indeed, all their influence from the soul of man in its relation to God its creator. They are not, therefore, external, nor, strictly speaking, expository; but internal, and requiring the exercise of thought, rather than the acquisition of any new knowledge.

One grand principle is this. *The bible should be interpreted in that manner which will most exalt God.* God is seeking the happiness of the universe, and the exaltation of himself; and the full exhibition of his own perfections is the only way in which the purposes of his infinite benevolence can be accomplished. Now the bible was sent into the world for this very purpose, the exhibition of his glory; manifestly, therefore, it ought to be interpreted in that way which will most exalt Him, no matter what the consequences are to man's character.

It should be interpreted according to its *own* exhibition of God, and not according to our previous conceptions in regard to him. Those conceptions are likely to be wrong. But, find out the character of God in the bible, and you have an unerring rule of interpretation for the whole of it. The law of gravitation interprets the movements of creation. Attempt an interpretation of them without this law, or with wrong conceptions of it, and we cannot so much as tell why an apple falls. Take a wrong conception of the character of

God, any other conception than that to be gained from his own word, and apply it to particular doctrines or events recorded in the scriptures, and the consequence must inevitably be, darkness and perplexity. Take the right idea of God's character, and in his light we see light. All things are clear, so far as they lie within our comprehension, and where they lie beyond it, the soul, that has a right view of God, is not only willing, but rejoices, to leave their explanation to the eternal world, and to God's own presence in heaven; assured, that though undiscoverable by human reason, they are yet in accordance with it; "that link follows link by necessary consequence; that religion soars out of the ken of reason, only where the eye of reason has reached its own horizon; and that faith is then but its continuation; even as the day softens away into the sweet twilight, and twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the darkness."*

The bible should be interpreted in that way, which *exhibits* ALL *God's attributes, and not merely one or two.* Here is a great point. Men are willing enough to have some of God's attributes exhibited, provided they may be permitted to choose which. Let them make to themselves a God of their own invention, and the idea of such a being would not be a painful one: *they would be sure to make a God who indulges sin.* The God of the bible is not the God of their hearts, and therefore not the God according to whose whole character they are willing to interpret the bible. Here is the secret of the rejection of the great doctrine of the atonement, and an explanation of the bitter hostility which multitudes feel towards it. What is there in it, if the human heart were friendly to God, to excite any person's enmity? The truth is, this doctrine would not be opposed, if it did not exhibit *all* God's moral attributes. If it brought to view *only* his mercy and readiness to pardon; if it did not also exhibit in the most awful manner his holiness and justice; if it did not portray the evil of sin, and its infinite malignity; if it displayed in God an indulgent weakness, and considered sin but a small evil; if it did not flash terror across the path of every lover of sin and rejecter of Christ, shewing that to all such God is a consuming fire;—it would not excite hostility: every heart would receive it, and the most abandoned with the greatest readiness; and this very doctrine, now so bitterly opposed, would be more violently applauded; it would be the praise and boast even of the Lord's enemies. This doctrine exhibits God's justice as well as mercy, and *that* is the reason why men reject it; it is because they dread God's JUSTICE. Moreover, this despised doctrine includes within itself necessarily all the *hard* sayings of God's word; all truths cluster and crowd around it, and blaze in its light, like an-

* Biographria Literaria, vol. ii. p. 190.

gels around the throne of God. It is the sun of truth in the moral universe.

> "Thither, as to their Fountain, other stars
> Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,"

and are hung up all over the glorious firmament of God's word, displaying, in a thousand ways, man's guilt and danger, and in a thousand ways pointing and inviting to the cross of Jesus, man's only way of regeneration and only hope of safety. His death shows man's depravity. "If one died for all, then were all dead." It shows man's ruin. "He came to seek and to save that which was lost." His dying agonies demonstrate the evil of sin. "He condemned sin in the flesh." They show not only the infinite love of God—"God is love,"—but his infinite justice. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." They show what those may expect, who die in their sins. They show the reality of hell as well as the certainty of heaven. They show that God is not trifling, neither with his own character, nor with the creatures he has made. In all this we learn the reason why the doctrine of the cross is so efficacious; why it is "the power of God unto salvation." It is not so by any arbitrary constitution, but because it displays God; all his attributes all in contrast with the character of the sinner. Humanly speaking, therefore, it is infinitely adapted to produce conviction of guilt and contrition of heart. It is an instrument worthy of being wielded by the omnipotent Spirit of God.

In the denial of this doctrine there is afforded a very clear case, in which a considerable number of men allow their own partial and distorted conceptions of God's character to lead them into an interpretation of the scriptures, which is glaring falsehood; to support which, they have to resort to arts of torture, instead of criticism, applied to God's word. The bible perplexes them. Whenever they open it, there is the same unaltered, troublesome language, respecting "Jesus Christ and him crucified," and his "blood shed for the remission of sins." They never can silence it, nor can all their ingenuity in the arts of critical blotting, and conjecture, and torture, afford their consciences a shield against this truth, or set them at rest in an interpretation perfectly and manifestly opposed to the whole tenor of the bible.

"With all organized truth," says Coleridge, and it is one of his greatest thoughts, "the component parts derive their significance from the idea of the whole. Bolingbroke removed grace, justice, and choice, from power and intelligence, and yet pretended to have left unimpaired the conception of a Deity. He might as consistently have paralyzed the optic nerve, and then excused himself by affirming that he had, however, not touched the eye." (The Friend, p. 38.)

We wish the modern Unitarians would take this truth, and ap-





ply it to their own most meager and defective views of the character of God, and to their rejection of the atonement in consequence of such partial, self-indulgent contemplations of its author. God's plan is perfect; it could not be otherwise; it is the equal manifestation of his whole character; the only plan, by which he could fully manifest himself. The book of nature exhibits but part of God's character: Christ crucified, the whole. The works of God are glorious; to a holy mind there is nothing on which God has laid the finger of his power, that does not sparkle with his glory; though it were but a withered daisy, or a particle of brier-down floating in the summer's air, it speaks of Him. Yet, till we behold *God manifest in the flesh*, the study and wonder of angels, and arch-angels, and beings pure from sin, who perhaps read all God's physical universe as easily as we read the pages of a book, we are taught comparatively nothing of God. The atonement is a display of his character, whose study will occupy them and us forever and ever; and they, who despise this doctrine are, in their infinite ignorance and pride and wickedness, despising the very way which God Almighty has chosen for the manifestation of himself to all the Universe. In throwing over it the veil of their own unbelief, they have shut out from their own souls what makes the bible a mighty book to the intellect as well as to the heart; what gives it power to arrest and awe the soul of the highest archangel; what makes it a book that the angels study; what has made it the intellectual lever with which God himself, moves and heaves the world. Their whole system, if system it can be called,

> "The other shape,
> If shape it might be called, that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
> Or substance might be called, that shadow seemed,
> For each seemed either,"

is like a palsy to the intellect, withering, stagnant, unthinking, superficial; and all the forms of literature itself, under that system must be superficial and soul-less. There is nothing in it to stir either the mind or the heart. In order to exist, they must keep, as to the knowledge of God's word, in an everlasting moral twilight, where the mind dares not move; for the noonday blaze of God's word expels and purges off such error; and then the mind encounters moral *principles*, instead of the flimsy sentimentalism of their speculations. Like the fiend floundering through chaos, and best to reduce the world to her 'original darkness,' they ask,

> "Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,
> Bordering on light;"

and having found this region they rest contented; for a step on the other side into the full light of the bible would utterly blind and confound them. The "veil is on their hearts;" they see not the

glory of the bible; they have taken away its glory; they have taken away what makes it spirit and life to the soul, and no wonder it is to them an uninteresting volume. No wonder they are so ready to give up book after book, epistle after epistle, endeavoring to set aside its authenticity and get rid of its authority, surrendering it at the slightest attack of scepticism, and tossed upon a sea of doubt in regard to the whole of the sacred canon. No wonder they deem unbelief no crime, though God himself has fixed upon it the seal and sentence of his abiding wrath. They have taken away the power of the bible over the conscience and the heart, and leave it more lifeless than the Koran, inasmuch as in it there are no appeals to human passion, no flattery of human selfishness. No wonder they care little for sending such a book to the heathen, nor that they think the world may be as easily christianized by a case of mathematical instruments. They have destroyed the soul of the bible. It has no soul, if it has no atonement, no Jesus Christ and him *crucified*. They have taken away the very thing which makes the bible the power of God unto salvation. "They have taken away our Lord, and we know not where they have laid him;" nor do they know themselves. They are an unhappy, most unhappy class; shivering in that gloomy, icy region, which lies between the heaven of heartfelt, saving faith, and the revolutionary hell of gross and outrageous infidelity.

Again: the bible should be interpreted not only according to the whole character of God, from whom it emanated, but according *to the whole character of man, for whom it was intended*. The moral aspect of that character is depravity. Therefore, it is not only in the light of God's character, but with the distinct remembrance of man's character also, that all the truths intended for man ought to be reflected on. The bible was not written for holy beings,—that is very evident,—but for the unholy; and with this one object in view, to recover them from a state of depravity and ruin, and to bring them back to God. Carrying along with us this great truth, we have another key of vast importance to the right interpretation of the whole bible; we must expect it to speak against ourselves, and must receive its reproofs home, and give as full credit to its dark representations of our own character, as we are willing to do to its bright representations of God's excellence. It comes to us as our Physician, to examine our fatal disease, and show to ourselves its terrible nature and symptoms, and to point out and administer the only possible remedy. If, now, we do not believe the truth that we have such a disease, the proposed remedy will seem needless, and so will all the severe discipline we are called upon to undergo; the bible will seem a gloomy book for proposing it, and we shall fall to contriving such methods of interpretation as will keep it out of view, and shall perhaps denounce both the rem-

edy and the discipline as fanatical, and the men who believe it, and act accordingly, as gloomy bigots. This is the way with the Unitarians. Rejecting the doctrine of human depravity, and having no conceptions of the infinite maliguity of sin, they consequently deny the need of a Divine Savior, and are thankful they can approach God without a Mediator. To such persons, the bible, being a volume of disciplinary truths for the reformation of the depraved, can do no good; they put themselves in their pride beyond the pale of its influences. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

We may hear men complaining, What a gloomy system that is, which tells of man's depravity, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. And indeed it is a gloomy system to the depraved: it cannot be otherwise. To those who do not love God, the bible is a gloomy book, and cannot be otherwise. If it were not, it would be a self-indulgent book, indulgent to sin, and this would be enough to prove it not from God. It would no longer be the bible. It is necessarily gloomy to the impenitent, because it condemns him; that system which is not gloomy to an impenitent sinner, is, for this very reason, likely to be untrue. It is one of the greatest marks against the system of liberal christianity, so called, that it is so much applauded by men of this world, men of frivolity, gaiety, fashion, pleasure, and forgetfulness of God. It is indeed a very pleasant thing for such people to be told of the perfectibility of human nature, the pure and holy aspirations of the soul, and the needlessness of an atonement.

*God is his own interpreter:* and we must be willing to let *God's word interpret itself:* nothing else can do it, there being no other authority, but what is fallible. In the light of this principle, we see the wisdom of revealing it in so many forms, and having it address itself to all the faculties of the human intellect. There are the old testament and the new, interpreting each other; the histories, the prophecies, the gospels, the epistles. It addresses itself exclusively neither to the reasoning faculty, nor to the imagination, nor to the judgment, nor to the affections, but to all, and to each one through the medium of the other. The light of divine truth falls upon the prism of the human mind in every direction, and is reflected in every variety of coloring, as one side or another of that wonderful prism is presented to it. Add to this, that it speaks to different ages of the human mind, and to different portions of the world, and yet to all together. One voice was to the age of Abraham and Moses, another to the age of David and Isaiah, another to the age of Paul and Trajan, yet each voice was to all; one voice is to the oriental world, another to the European, yet each to all; and all uttering his name, above every name of whom "Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." In all this there is no incongruity, no discrepancy, but a similarity in the

midst of distinctions; a reflection of the special *in* the general, and a translucence of the general *through* the special; a suiting of the sacred volume to the whole world, and a reflection in it of the face, not of one generation or of one people, but of all mankind through all ages. "Its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as life, and a symbol of eternity, inasmuch as the past and future are virtually contained in the present. According, therefore, to our relative position on its banks, the sacred history becomes prophetic, the sacred prophecies historical, while the power and substance of both inhere in its laws, its promises, and its comminations."* Truth in the bible is the voice of God speaking to all time; it is truth for the human heart, not for one age; it is the mirror, in which not the much talked of spirit of the age is reflected, but in which *mankind* may see themselves under all circumstances, through all time.

No one of the truths of the bible in reality clashes with another, and it should be read with the remembrance, that if at any time they seem contradictory, the contradiction is probably in the mind of the reader. It should be read with the remembrance, that the sacred writers were not polemics, nor ever feared that by giving strong prominence to one doctrine, they should lead their reader to undervalue or neglect another. They always treated with energy of language and ardor of feeling the subject immediately under consideration, as if the mind were exclusively filled with it; and they sometimes presented one view of it, sometimes another. Had this always been borne in mind, Paul and James would never have been thought contradictory. We cannot help quoting a passage from Burke, which completely conveys the true principle of interpretation on this subject. It is to be found in his "Appeal from the new to the old whigs."

"As any one of the great members of this constitution happens to be endangered, he that is a friend to all of them, chooses and presses the topics necessary for the support of the part attacked, with all the strength, the earnestness, the vehemence, with all the powers of stating, of argument, of coloring, which he happens to possess, and which the case demands. He is not to embarrass the minds of his hearers, or to incumber or overlay his speech, by bringing into view at once, as if he were reading an academic lecture, all that may and ought, when a just occasion presents itself, to be said in favor of the other members. At that time they are out of the court; there is no question concerning them. Whilst he opposes his defense on the part where the attack is made, he presumes, that for his regard to the just rights of all the rest, he has credit in every candid mind. He ought not to apprehend that his raising fences about popular privileges this day, will infer that he ought on the next to concur with those who would pull down the throne: because

* Statesman's Manual.

on the next he defends the throne, it ought not to be supposed that has abandoned the rights of the people."

"A man who, among various objects of his equal regard, is secure of some, and full of anxiety for the fate of others, is apt to go to much greater lengths in his preference of the object of his immediate solicitude, than Mr. Burke has ever done. A man so circumstanced often seems to undervalue, to vilify, almost to reprobate and disown, those that are out of danger. This is the voice of nature and truth, and not of inconsistency and false pretence. The danger of any thing very dear to us, removes for the moment, every other affection from the mind. When Priam had his whole thoughts employed on the body of his Hector, he repels with indignation, and drives from him with a thousand reproaches, his surviving sons, who, with an officious piety crowded about him to offer their assistance. A good critic, (there is no better than Mr. Fox,) would say that this is a master-stroke, and marks a deep understanding of nature in the father of poetry. He would despise a Zoilus, who would conclude from this passage, that Homer meant to represent this man of affliction as hating, or being indifferent or cold in his affections to the poor relics of his house, or that he preferred a dead carcass to his living children."

Another principle of interpretation, drawn from the bible itself, is that *the same credit is due to the words of the apostles as to the words of Christ.* It is no uncommon thing, either in books or conversation, to find the deniers of our Lord's divinity and atonement, expressing great reverence for all that fell from his lips, but evading and denying the authority of what you urge from the inspired apostles. Now this is a manifest inconsistency. In the first place, it is on the authority of the apostles only, that we receive the words of Christ; and in the next place, we must either at once deny the inspiration of the apostles, or else acknowledge that their words are also and equally the words of their Master. Jesus himself said to them, "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." "He will guide you into all truth." Well might they say, therefore, "We have the mind of Christ." "The word of God, which ye heard of us, we received not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God." "He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." "We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth us not. HEREBY KNOW WE THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR." We desire nothing more than that our readers should apply this solemn test to Unitarianism, in respect to the discredit its advocates seek to cast upon the sacred writers, especially, the apostles of our Lord and Savior.

Again: *the scriptures ought manifestly to be studied and interpreted, in particular portions, with the remembrance of, and ref-*

*erence to, their general harmony.* We need to view them, therefore, from a position of sight and feeling very elevated. There is a great and glorious harmony in the bible, which those only can in any measure appreciate, who look upon it with an enlarged and comprehensive view. We may learn much from the analogy of nature. God's plan is perfect in both worlds, natural and moral; but all things were not made for the inspection of one particular mind, or the range of one particular vision: what is beauty to the human vision, would be deformity to the microscopic eye. What we sometimes think defects, we find afterwards, in a more comprehensive view, not only are lost sight of as defects, but add to the symmetry and glory of the scene. When we look at a great painting, if we go nearer than the point of vision, in which the view of each part is sustained by the conception of the whole, the painting will inevitably lose its grandeur, and appear defective, though perhaps perfect in its kind. A fly, sitting on one of the stones in Westminster Abbey, might be soliloquizing on the roughness and deformity of his resting place, while many human beings are admiring the venerable grandeur of the pile.

Let us take an illustration from nature. We have had the happiness, several times, of visiting mount Holyoke in Massachusetts. The scenery of Amherst is very beautiful, even in detail; but examined in detail, there are prospects not peculiarly attractive, and features that appear unsightly to the eye. It would be easy for a caviler, even in regard to the works of nature, to ask of what possible use or beauty is that barren sand bank, or this huge misshapen rock: it would be easy for such a being to ask the like question in regard to minute portions of God's word. But we found, as we traveled up the side of the mountain, that every imperfection, or what we had at first concluded to be such, had gradually disappeared, or was evidently adding, as we advanced, to the increasing glory of the view. Wherever we stopped, and turned to gaze through the forest on the expanding region below, every successive prospect, as we rose higher and higher, exhibited those apparent imperfections changing into beauty; and when at length we found ourselves upon the summit, it was truly a scene of unmingled beauty and grandeur. It was the sublime of loveliness. Towards the South, an almost interminable range of mountain elevations sink behind each other, withdrawing the vision to such a distance, that heaven and earth are at length indistinguishable, and blended together in the atmosphere, and all along beneath them the broad valley of the Connecticut reposes in the light. To the West, what an amphitheater of forests and steepled villages and cultivated farms, rises from the meadows at the foot of the mountain, and recedes, terrace after terrace, to the horizon! Directly beneath us, glides 'at his sweet will,' the pleasant river, a silver thread, it is so far below, through forests of chesnuts, and fields of

broom, and broad meadow lands, dotted with noble elms, looking like gardens in paradise. In the whole scene we scarce know which to admire most, its sublimity or its loveliness.

Now, on the summit of this mountain, (for we have not lost sight of the point to be illustrated,) no one thinks of any unsightly features which he supposed he had met with below; and it would be worth while to travel up the precipice, were it for this only, to find in God's works, what seemed on a near prospect incongruous and out of proportion, composing essential parts of one harmonious whole. It is so with God's word. Incongruities are harmonized, and perplexities lost sight of, in a heart absorbed with a comprehensive view of its glory. What an infidel would term imperfections, contribute to the universal harmony, and are the results of that same freedom and greatness of scale, with which the works of God are all launched into existence; and mysteries and things incomprehensible are like the blending of heaven and earth, in a distance which the eye cannot reach, amidst light that is itself almost a spiritual mystery. Surely it is worth all the self-mortification and prayerful discipline the soul can undergo, to rise to such a glorious conception of God's plan in the moral world, as would be analogous to the view of his physical creation, which one gains from the summit of that beautiful mountain!

There is an external principle of interpretation worth attending to, in the light of which Mr. Norton's speculations about the obsoleteness of the doctrine of the trinity are truly ludicrous. For hundreds of years the bible has been in use more or less generally among the body of the people. The common sense of the whole mass of minds has had opportunity for exercise in regard to its interpretation. What now is the system of faith, which the mass of unprejudiced readers have discovered in it, and drawn from it, and in the exhibition of which the bible has proved powerful over the hearts and consciences of men? What is it, that not merely in theory, but in practice, has made the bible the power of God unto salvation? We believe there is no candid man, who knows any thing of the religious history of the world since the days of Christ, any thing of the religious history of England, any thing of the religious history of our own country, who will not acknowledge that it is that system, despised and deemed foolishness by a few, but held, in speculation at least, by the multitude, which comprehends the doctrine of the trinity, but has for its emphatic designation *Jesus Christ and him crucified;* that system which exhibits God's holy law, and its awful penalty, God's infinite holines and man's depravity, and God's infinite love in a divine Savior provided for the perishing and guilty soul. What other system has ever had the least power over the hearts and consciences of men? Innumerable other systems have been tried: every age has had its own. The spirit of error has risen in ten thousand forms, and in all instances

has pretended to build upon the bible. From Nicolaitans down to Unitarians, multitudes innumerable, all Milton's fallen demons, wandering over the earth in the shape of bible truth,

> "Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
> In Vallombrosa———:
> All these, and more come flocking,"

seeking rest, and finding none. Their errors have risen, and are rising, and will continue to rise and disappear one after the other, accomplishing each in turn, the grand object of the father of lies, to vex the church of God and lure souls to perdition;—rising out of the wickedness and ignorance of the human heart, as fiery exhalations rise from putrid marshes, to dance and burn and go out again in the darkness. But where is there one of them that has proved the power of God unto salvation? Where has the bible been preached in any other way, than as an exhibition of Christ and him crucified, without failing to move the human soul a particle towards its God? It is this system, and no other, that has laid hold with the grasp of omnipotence on the human mind, and no matter how feebly preached, no matter by what contemptible instrument soever, has gone down into the human soul, roused its spiritual energies, broken up the great depths of feeling, unsealed the profoundest fountains of the being, and changed the whole existence from earthly to heavenly, from sin to holiness, from self to God. It has done this in multitudes of instances, when the mightiest exertions of the human intellect would have been lavished in vain. It has done it for the most perfectly abject and degraded of the human race, by whom the exhibitions of the wisdom of this world would have been gazed at with stupid brutality. It is the intellect of God only that can reach, inspire, raise and renew such a being. And the preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified does it, because it *is* the intellect of God; and, though denied, and sneered at, and esteemed foolishness by the fearful presumption of some, it is, in reality, the mightiest exhibition of the intellect of the Infinite Jehovah. No wonder it takes hold on the soul; no wonder it can do this, when the art of man is utterly confounded. It is the power of God; it is the arm of his moral omnipotence!

What would a Greenlander or a Hottentot say to the speculations of Priestley or of Dr. Channing? Let us figure to ourselves preachers of this stamp going to exhibit their refinements, their taste, their sentimentality, to a tribe of Esquimaux or a horde of wandering Tartars; going to preach to them about the perfectibility and dignity of human nature, the pure and holy aspirations of the soul, the innocency of unbelief, the mere human character of Jesus Christ, the absurdity of an atonement, the needlessness of a mediator between God and man! Would such a system touch the heart? The thought is a monstrous absurdity. There

is nothing in it that can stir the soul in the least degree, or strike a solitary chord in the recesses of man's spiritual being, or have any other effect whatever than an iceberg, or a continent of icebergs would have upon our whole atmosphere, should it move down from the polar seas, and take up its station along our coast, to remain there moored for centuries! If this freezing, desolate negation of godliness be true christianity, the sovereign, vaunted remedy for infidelity, why do not its adherents try it for the conversion of the world, and prove its truth by its powerful effects? If *this* is the power of God unto salvation, why do they not obey the command of Christ, and go into all the world to preach *this* gopel to every creature? Why leave the evangelization of the world to be effected by the preaching of that very doctrine, and that very system of doctrines, which they cast out as absurd, and even ridiculous,—a libel upon God's character. If they have a better way of exhibiting God's character, a moral talisman of mightier energy than the exhibition of Jesus Christ and him crucified; above all, if they deem the doctrine of atonement, and the truths that shine in its light, a perversion of the bible; and the fictions of gloomy men, bent upon reducing the world to spiritual bondage,—why, in the name of all that concerns man's best interests, do they not send to the perishing, imploring nations, their own LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY, this last, best gift of heaven to man, and let us behold it working its wonders of regenerating mercy on our ruined race? Ah, liberal minded men! your own experience has taught you, that the spirit of a missionary forms no part or principle of your system; nor of any system, that does not bear, written all over it, the loved and adored name of Jesus Christ and him crucified, and that does not breathe throughout, the memory of the Lamb of God, that "taketh away the sin of the world." A missionary's peculiar emphatic designation, his title of honor and love, is and has been all the world over, Missionary of THE CROSS.

This blasphemed system of religious truth—Jesus Christ and him crucified—is the system, in the exhibition of which the bible has exerted its most powerful effect on the intellect as well as the heart of men. In the light of this truth, Professor Norton's assumed intellectual superiority over the doctrine of the trinity, and his grave conclusion that it is expunged from the creed of all who make any pretensions to intelligence, are very amusing. Perhaps he has forgotten the names of Lord Bacon and Henry More; and probably the Halls, the Taylors, the Coleridges, and the Fosters, are in his view men of very weak intellect, by the side of Dr. Channing.

The truth is a great one, and it were well if this age would reflect upon it, that the best period in the literature of Great Britain, the period in which that nation appears, for her intellectual power,

like a giant among the nations, is the one in which her noblest minds were imbued and penetrated with the evangelical system of religious truth, the system that includes the ideas of a holy God, and a holy law, with an adequate sanction; the ideas of a guilty world, an atoning Savior, and a regenerating Spirit; the system that exhibits both the Cross and the Trinity. Then men were abundant, whose learning was not only of a gigantic aspect, but whose love to Christ crucified would have adorned the age of primitive apostolic piety. And when Christ crucified began to be left out of view, and a spiritual death, something like that of Unitarianism, was creeping over the nation, then was it that giants like Howe, Cudworth, and Leighton, began to be succeeded by the Tillotsons, the Seckers, and the Seeds; and together with the departure of the national mind from the spiritual principles that center in the atonement, may be measured the decline of the nation in intellectual energy.

It is nothing but the combined intellectual and moral spirit of the system of the cross, that has produced in the literature of the English tongue, such books as the Paradise Lost, Butler's Analogy, the Pilgrim's Progress, Edwards on the Will, the Saint's Rest, the Blessedness of the Righteous, Cowper's Task, Henry Martyn's Memoirs; and such writers of hymns as Watts and Charles Wesley, almost the only individuals who have been eminently successful in this difficult species of composition. Now, think of the system of *liberal christianity* as producing such a work as John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress!! The combined energies of all the minds that ever were deluded by that fatal system, would be inadequate to the production of a solitary page.

Again: A great guide to the true interpretation of God's word, is to be found *in the opinion of those, who are known to have communed most closely with God.* They are most likely to discover and know, without mistake, God's precise meaning in the words he uses. This is the dictate of true wisdom, and not of superstition; we act according to it in the things of this world. All men, who have come to such greatness as to be considered authorities among their fellow men, have at one time or another had the meaning of their words, even of their written phrases, disputed. Now, to whom would all most readily repair for a decision of the disputed point? Would it not be to those, if any such could be found, who had been intimately acquainted with the character and habits, both intellectual and moral, of the author in question; who had enjoyed his intimate friendship, and known the workings of his mind, and his opinions on many subjects. To take an individual instance for illustration. James Madison was one amongst the framers of the constitution. He was a friend to Washington, and knew the views and feelings of almost all his fellow laborers.

It is therefore justly and with great wisdom, that we apply to this living oracle, to know what the constitution means, in phrases whose meaning is now made the subject of dispute.

We may learn a lesson from this in regard to God's word. There have been men, especially since the reformation, who have gilded the gloom of the world with the light of a living and radiant piety; men of great and acknowledged wisdom, who have lived very near to God, who are known and confessed, even by their enemies, to have maintained a close walk with him, and to have arrived at such a degree of holiness, as will render their names illustrious forever. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and such men have participated, as it were, in God's counsels; have been admitted to the honor of knowing the secrets of his mind; and are of all others the least likely to be mistaken in their interpretation of God's word. Let us mention a few of their names. Leighton, Usher, Baxter, Hall, Taylor, Howe, the Henrys, Owen, Hale, Sir Robert Boyle, Watts, Doddridge, Newton, Cecil, Bunyan, Henry Martyn, David Brainard, President Edwards, Whitefield, Payson. These are native names; we have not gone beyond our own language. These and multitudes of others who walked with God through life, trusted in Christ as an Almighty Savior, and loved God's word, because it spake to them of Jesus Christ, and him crucified: it revealed to them, not a catalogue of Unitarian negatives, but the doctrine of the Trinity, and the system of the Cross. "These all died in faith;" they found in the bible an atoning Savior. We would give more for an opinion on this subject from a man like David Brainard, than for all human arguments else.

We have spoken of the harmony of the bible. One word in regard to its whole spiritual tenor, according to which it should be interpreted in particular passages,—it is manifestly from beginning to end one of *solemn warning*. The beings it addresses are evidently considered by it in peril of their souls forever; and its whole tenor looks to a day of judgment, and an endless retribution of happiness or misery. The words of particular passages innumerable declare the same thing, with positive and pungent application to every individual conscience. In putting any different construction upon them, we have both to wrest the particular passage from its plain and inevitable signification, and to do equal violence to the argument gathered from the whole tenor of the scriptures. The very object of the bible is to tell men their danger of perdition, and to point out the way whereby they may avoid it. Its professed aim and design, and the whole purpose for which it was sent into the world, is to save men from hell, and to raise them to heaven; and in view of all this, what shall we call the conduct of those, who, in the very face of all the awful descriptions and warnings of the bible, would gravely persuade us, that there is

no hell! If the bible has not a correspondency in the eternal world to its descriptions and warnings and imagery, if they are descriptions without the correlative realities, of all the books that ever were published, it is the falsest. Such a book would indeed be a marvel and miracle of falsehood; it would require superhuman powers to construct it.

The last principle we shall mention, and one that lies at the foundation of all others is this: *The bible should be interpreted with right feelings of heart*, in the exercise of penitence, humility, faith and love. All the principles we have specified are in subordination to this: a heart friendly to God is the only right interpreter either of his works or word. And this is what our Savior meant when he said, "If any man will do my will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." A sinful heart can have no right views of God, and of course will have defective views of his word. Sin distorts the judgment, and overturns the mind's balance on all moral subjects, far more than even the best of men are aware. There is, there can be, no true reflection of God or his truth from the bosom darkened with guilt, from the heart at enmity against Him. That man will always look at God through the medium of his own selfishness, and at God's word through the coloring of his own wishes, prejudices, and fears. A heart that loves the Savior, and rejoices in God as its sovereign, reflects back in calmness the perfect view of his character, which it finds in his word. Behold, on the borders of a mountain lake, the reflection of the scene above received into the bosom of the lake below. See that crag projecting, the wild flowers that hang out from it, and bend as if to gaze at their own forms in the water beneath. Observe that plat of green grass above, that tree springing from the cleft, and over all the quiet sky, with its sailing clouds, reflected in all its softness and depth from the lake's steady surface. How perfect the reflection! Does it not seem as if there were two heavens? And just as perfect, and clear, and free from confusion and perplexity, is the reflection of God's character and the truths of his word, from the quietness of the heart that loves the Savior, and is seeking God's glory.

Now look again. The wind is on the lake, and drives forward its waters in crested and impetuous waves, angry and turbulent. Where is that sweet image? There is no change above. The sky is clear, the crag projects as boldly, the flowers look just as sweet in their unconscious simplicity; but below, banks, trees and skies, are all mingled in confusion. There is just as much confusion in every unholy mind's idea of God and his blessed word. God and his truth are always clear, always the same; but the passions of men fill their own hearts with obscurity and turbulence; their depravity is in itself obscurity; and through all this perplexity and wilful ignorance, their souls troubled,

like the stormy sea, with restless conflicts of passion, they contend that God is just such a being as they behold him, that their hearts give back the true reflection, and that they themselves are very good beings in his sight. We have heard of a defect in the bodily vision, which represents all objects upside down; but that man would certainly be called insane, who under the influence of this misfortune, should so blind his understanding, as to believe and assert, that men walk on their heads and that the trees grow downwards. Is is not a much greater insanity for men, who in their hearts do not love God, and in their lives insult and disobey him, to give credit to their own perverted representations of him and his word? As long as men will continue to look at God's truth through the medium of their own pride and prejudice, so long they will have mistaken views of God and eternity, and are deceiving their own soul into endless ruin.

Of what infinite importance to man's best interests is the right interpretation of God's holy word! A mistake here is a mistake for eternity. It is so because the bible is so plain a book, that he who runs may read, and if his heart were right with God, could not fail to know precisely what God means. Therefore, whoever takes up with a deceitful interpretation, and suffers himself to be lulled with error, will be found at the great day of judgment to have done it, because he would rather listen to the dictates of his depraved heart, than to the voice of conscience enlightened by God's truth. Followers of Dr. Channing! beware! beware! Unbelief is *not* innocent; error *is* crime. There would be no error were there no depravity; it is therefore infinitely dangerous. And remember: You go into eternity, not with Dr. Channing's Discourses, or Professor Norton's Statement of Reasons for not Believing, as your judge; but, with the bible in your hands, and its declarations of your own character and destiny plain before you. In the light of this book, there are no shadowy and uncertain shapes flitting on the interminable shore of the ocean you are soon to sail; the scenes that will receive your coming, and surround you forever, are revealed with such fullness of splendor, in characters of such impressive, unalterable, deep-traced truth, that your duty could not be better known, if it were marked by the path of the lightning, on the vaulted sky above you. Oh beware! If you take not refuge in Christ, you are lost, lost. "*There is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*"



13

A

# REVIEW

OF

## "MEN AND MANNERS IN AMERICA, BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CYRIL THORNTON.'"

Thomas Hamilton.
Andrews Norton.

[From the Select Journal, No. I. for 1834.]

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In reading this new account of our country, we were reminded of an anecdote related by Sir John Malcolm in his very amusing "Sketches of Persia." After giving a rather favorable description of the condition of society at Muscat, he informs us that the state of things made a different impression upon a sailing-master in the English navy. There is, it seems, an order of the English Admiralty, that the officers of a man-of-war, when they visit a port little known, should describe the manners and customs of the inhabitants. The sailing-master, who was not such an adept in writing as the author of the book before us, long endeavoured to evade this duty, till, being strongly urged by his captain, he at last produced his journal with the following entry.

"*Inhabitants of Muscat.*

"As to manners they have none, and their customs are very beastly."

The purpose of these volumes is to convey in a more diffuse style the same information concerning the United States, which, as regards Muscat, the honest sailing-master condensed into a single line.

Before the publication of this work, Mr. Hamilton's reputation rested upon the authorship of a novel, in which, though its morality is spurious, there is some good description, some interesting

narrative, and some humor. It entitled him, as far as a single production of the kind could do, to a respectable literary rank among the second-rate novelists of the day; but the principal interest which it excited was occasioned by its being mistaken for a sort of autobiography. He had also published an Account of the Peninsular War, which lays claim to no higher merit than may belong to a mere detail of military movements and battles. To these literary claims, he added, we believe, the doubtful merit of being a contributor to "Blackwood's Magazine." He was principally known here by his novel, and during his visit to this country was almost as often spoken of by the name of Cyril Thornton as by his own.

While among us, he was freely received and welcomed in good society, an advantage which none of his predecessors in similar attacks upon this country have enjoyed, with the exception of Captain Hall. Mr. Hamilton was free from the *brusquerie*, ill manners, and talkative vanity, with which every one knows that Captain Hall's excellent qualities are a little disguised. As he was known solely as an author, it was thought not improbable, that he too might turn his travels to account by writing a book; but it was supposed, that, whatever might be his prejudices, he would write with the spirit and feelings of a gentleman.

The present work, however, is essentially a political tract, swelled out to an inordinate size. It is even professedly written for a party purpose; to support the sinking cause of Toryism in Great Britain. The writer says.

"When I found the institutions and experience of the United States deliberately quoted in the reformed Parliament, as affording safe precedent for British legislation, and learned that the drivellers who uttered such nonsense, instead of encountering merited derision, were listened to with patience and approbation, by men as ignorant as themselves, I certainly did feel that another work on America was yet wanted, and at once determined to undertake a task, which inferior considerations would probably have induced me to decline." — Vol. I, p. iv.

If it was, as seems here implied, a publication more scurrilous than Mrs. Trollope's, and more captious and prejudiced than Captain Hall's, which his party wanted, the author has succeeded in supplying the deficiency. We regret that any consideration should have induced him to engage in such a work. It has given us that feeling of mortification, which is always experienced when we are compelled to change our opinion of one of whom we have been willing to think well. An individual who submits to the composition of a party work of such a character as this, is liable to the suspicion of having been influenced by some other reward, received or expected, besides literary fame, and his bookseller's payment,

and the approbation of his conscience. But in the case of so respectable a gentleman as Mr. Hamilton, we ought perhaps to presume, that his book had its origin only in gross illiberality, virulent party spleen, and general bad temper.

We are disappointed, not only in the moral feeling which the work displays, but in the degree of ability with which it is written. It is long since we read Mr. Hamilton's novel; but the impression, which that has left upon our minds, of the talent of the author, is very different from what we have received from this publication. That, indeed, afforded no reason for regarding him as possessed of the power of thinking clearly, or reasoning consistently, but discovered, one might suppose, a degree of shrewdness, sufficient to prevent him from attempting what he was wholly unqualified to perform. In the work before us there are some parts which remind us of the power displayed in his first production, as the description of the Niagara and of the Mississippi, though these are blemished by faults of bad taste. There is likewise an abundance of passages intended to be humorous; and though the humor is, for the most part, coarse and vulgar, yet there are some that may excite a smile. If Mr. Hamilton, however, while in this country, was often as pertinaciously jocose in conversation as he is in his book, we do not wonder that he left us with the impression, that Americans had no relish for wit. He dwells too long upon his good things. A reader, upon first taking up his book, may suppose that a joke or an argument is at last fairly despatched. But in the course of a page or two he will probably find, that the author has caught hold of it again, and is worrying it anew with a sort of feline pleasure. What he has once said, he thinks good enough to say again. It would be idle, for instance, to attempt to number the various passages, in which he has expressed his horror at the silent and awful voracity, with which Americans devour their "oleaginous" food in hotels and on board of steam-boats. It is a staple topic of his book. "The American," he somewhere says, "is diurnally mortified and abased" by dining at a public ordinary, — like the ancient Spartans, we presume. This process of degradation, it is implied, is every day suffered by our countrymen generally. But we quote from a long passage laboriously witty; and the author usually regards his wit as sufficiently good to render any great mixture of truth unnecessary.

Dr. Moore in his amusing "View of Society and Manners in France," has introduced fictitious personages and anecdotes in order to illustrate his conceptions of the French character. But the practice has not been common, and has of late years fallen into disuse. Mr. Hamilton, however, appears to have revived it for the purpose of giving a more striking view of what he would

represent as the condition of society in this country. Probably indeed many of his illustrative stories and descriptions are, as novelists say, founded upon fact, and are indebted to the genius of the author only for their peculiar coloring and striking effect. But of facts, in the proper sense of the word, for the narratives just referred to cannot be so considered, the number scattered through the book is scanty; and they are most of them trifling. The work can hardly be considered as a book of travels. It may be described as a production, presenting at much length those opinions respecting America, which the Tory or Conservative party in England think it their interest to propagate, accompanied with stories intended for exemplification. It may be worth while, however, to consider what would be the value of the publication, supposing it to contain the real opinions of the author.

On the 18th of November, 1830, (we are able to supply the date of the year, which the author for some reason omits to mention,) Mr. Hamilton arrived at New-York; on the 20th of July, 1831, after an interval of eight months, he sailed for England. Removing as soon as possible from the older and more cultivated portion of our country, he set out in the beginning of March to cross the Alleghanies and penetrate into the Western States, a portion of our territory whose inhabitants have accumulated upon it within the lifetime of an individual. He descended the Ohio and Mississippi in steam-boats, and probably found his fellow passengers such as any wise man, acquainted with the history of the country, would have expected to find them. If, however, he has not given a very exaggerated description of their manners, he was particularly unfortunate. They shocked him, an English Foot Captain, by such profane language as, it seems, he had never heard before. '*Our armies swore terribly in Spain, but it was nothing to this.*' He spent some time at New Orleans, where, "he feared the standard of morals was not very high; though in no city are the externals of decorum more rigidly maintained." He then travelled by land through a wild, unsettled country, never, perhaps, travelled for pleasure before, to Augusta, in Georgia. During what he calls a "hurried progress through the Southern States," that is, through a very small portion of the Southern States, "I was rarely," he says, "*brought into contact* with men of opulence and intelligence." In fact he saw nothing of society. Arriving by water from Charleston at New-York some time in May, he immediately set out for Niagara and Canada, where he was more than a month. Thus having spent not quite five months in that extensive portion of our country, where alone the American character is to be studied, and having observed very little more of any other part of it than could be seen on board of steam-boats on the Ohio and Mis-



sissippi, he returned home somewhat less qualified if possible than when he left it, to write a book on "Men and Manners in America." We say, less qualified than when he left it; for the temper with which he travelled, or the purpose for which he has written, has evidently led him to dwell with pleasure only upon those recollections or imaginations, which could be made use of in depreciating the country. It is a little remarkable, that travellers in our land, and especially from continental Europe, have been disposed to speak well of it, very much in proportion to their own acquintance with polished society, to the respectability of their characters, and even to their rank in life. We have been assailed principally by writers of a different class. We pass over the contemptible race of the Welds, Fearons, and Fiddlers, of whom too much notice has been taken. But, to rise a little higher, — Captain Hall goes home disgusted with our inelegance, our want of deference, our vanity, and our un-English boasting of our own country. Mrs. Trollope, a friend of Fanny Wright's, is shocked at our vulgarity, and boldly ridicules the want of gallantry in our men, and the prudery of our women; and at last the author of Cyril Thornton, a contributor to "Blackwood's Magazine," appears, to give us a solemn lecture upon our general immorality and want of principle, upon our shameful disregard of the decencies of life, and particularly upon the scurrility of our newspapers, such as he had never read in any periodical publication at home.

No one would suppose, that an American who had spent five months in travelling through England, Scotland, and Ireland, and three more in visiting the Hebrides and the Shetland Isles, would return from that country highly qualified by his excursion to write on the government and religion of Great Britain, the constitution of its society, and the character, morals, and manners of the English, Scotch, and Irish. If he went abroad already well informed upon those subjects, and was a quick and impartial observer, with a competent power of reasoning, he might add to his information and correct some of his opinions. If he travelled full of prejudices, he would probably take note only of those appearances which might serve to confirm him in error. The latter has clearly been the case with Mr. Hamilton. Nor, supposing his intention and capacity to have been the best, were his opportunities for observation of much value. One might as well think himself qualified to form a general estimate of Europe by having spent two thirds of a year in travelling through it, as a general estimate of the United States. With the exception of a greater uniformity of language and of government, the United States present diversities as considerable and as various as the different States of Europe. No intelligent American would think himself qualified to give a particular char-

acter of the different portions of his own country without having devoted years to travel and study.

A common topic with those writers, who have had a political purpose in disparaging this country, has been the grossness and vulgarity of our manners. The manners, however, of a well-bred and intelligent American are the same as the manners of well-bred and intelligent men in every other part of the world, with perhaps, as a general character, more sensitiveness, more reserve, and more truth of expression and of feeling in his offers of kindness. Of this class there is as large a proportion in our country as in any other. The representations which Mrs. Trollope and Mr. Hamilton have given, if they are intended to apply to those who would here be considered as gentlemen, are as gross — what shall we say? not caricatures, for a caricature implies some resemblance, — but as gross misstatements, as if applied to the gentlemen of England. The error, so far as it has any foundation, has arisen from their mistaking every well-dressed person in this country, where almost every one is well-dressed when not employed in daily labor, for an American gentleman; and from their being confused by the absence of those artificial demarkations of different ranks, which in England are observed, not only in the intercourse of polished society, but in all the relations in which men are brought together. In a country, in which incomparably more individuals are in motion by land and water, than in any other, they have travelled in stage-coaches and steam-boats through some of its rudest parts, and dined at tavern ordinaries, and found themselves surrounded by vulgar people; without any of that tact in escaping from the inconvenience, which an intelligent American soon acquires. They have perhaps taken a sort of pleasure in putting themselves in the way of it, that they might have a story to tell. Mr. Hamilton relates, that at a tavern, a "gentleman," to whom he sent his plate for chicken, "cut out the whole body for himself and handed him (Mr. H.) the drumsticks." We have seen this story quoted in an English review, "The British Critic," with the word *gentleman* italicized. Let us suppose that the story is "founded on fact." Is it imaginable that any body less silly than some of the writers in "The British Critic" should draw the inference, that this conduct is here considered as gentlemanly, or that the individual complained of would be regarded as less a boor in this country than any where else? Yet the evident purpose of telling the story is, that such an inference may be drawn.

Occasionally, as if through inadvertence, passages escape from Mr. Hamilton, which, if properly considered, would go far to do away the general impression that his book is intended to convey. In travelling in the United States he says, "A person of true breed-

ing will rarely be treated with disrespect. He will receive tribute without exacting it; and even in this democratic country may safely leave it 'to men's opinions to tell the world he is a gentleman.'" (Vol. II, pp. 4, 5.) This general remark, however, may seem not quite reconcilable with some of Mr. Hamilton's stories; about which we doubted whether they fairly fell within the allowable license of a traveller, till a satisfactory solution of them occurred to us. The fact is, that while travelling through this country Mr. Hamilton for the most part left it merely to his manners to tell the stage-drivers and inn-keepers that he was a gentleman. He entirely disregarded the sensible remark of Bob Acres; — "Dress does make a difference, Davie." He indeed complains, that, in a steam-boat on the Ohio, his servant was obliged to "ensconce himself behind a curtain while *cleaning his clothes*"! — in order that he might appear with proper neatness before his beastly fellow-passengers. The writer of this notice, however, happened to see Mr. Hamilton for several days on his travels, when the company about him was such, that a regard to his appearance would not have been preposterous; and he had then either dismissed his servant, or the office of "cleaning his clothes" had become a sinecure. Whoever had been fated to attempt it, might have uttered exclamations like those of Lady Macbeth while walking in her sleep. No one could have suspected from his outward man, that he suffered under such a horror of "oleaginous" substances as he repeatedly affirms to be the fact. We speak with all soberness when we say, that we never before saw an individual so shabby, so dirty, and so unshaved, who meant to pass for a gentleman. The keepers of our inns and hotels might well have been a little surprised, if, appearing as he then did, he had seemed to think himself entitled to any extraordinary attention or accommodation.

As regards the manners of our community at large, we will speak only of that portion of it concerning which we can speak from long personal knowledge, the inhabitants of New England. We the more readily limit ourselves to them, as, in his endeavours to defame the country, Mr. Hamilton has been more elaborate and repetitive in his abuse of this section of it than of any other. Strange therefore as it may seem to those who have drawn their conceptions of the New England character from such books as Mr. Hamilton's Travels, we assure them with a feeling of entire confidence, that no portion of England can be taken, containing an equal population with New England, in which there is so much moral principle, so much real courtesy and kindness, so much knowledge of and regard to the decorums of life, so much intelligence, and, as this seems to be made a point of importance, in which the English language is spoken with so much cor-

rectness. Our opportunities for forming a judgment of what exists here have been very different from Mr. Hamilton's; and we are well acquainted, as all intelligent Americans are, with the state of England; whatever allowance any one pleases may be made for our prejudices in favor of our native country; but against England we have none whatever. Strong associations, which no folly nor malice of individual writers can weaken, attach us to the land of our ancestors, and never before were the higher interests of two nations so inseparably blended as those of England and our own.

Excepting a residence of nearly three weeks in Boston, Mr. Hamilton saw nothing of New England but what may be seen in rapidly travelling through it in winter. He spent not a month in the whole country. On the society to which he was introduced in Boston he bestows compliments not worth quoting, but the amount of which is, that it was as moral, gentlemanly, and intelligent as is to be found in any city of the same size. But the New Englanders, generally, are, according to him, a very different class of men, offensively vulgar in their habits and language, impertinently inquisitive, ignorant, obstinate in their prejudices, obtrusively vain of their country, yet without any attachment to it, engrossed by money-getting, hard, selfish, cold, cunning, and knavish. We have not exaggerated the prevailing tone of coloring in the picture, which he gives of what he elsewhere gravely calls "this interesting people." He seems himself to have been aware, that his readers must perceive that his description of them was at utter variance with all that his regard to truth, or some other feeling, had led him to represent as the character of those individual New Englanders (in Boston), with whom alone he had any opportunity of becoming acquainted. He, in consequence, subjoins this note to his labored and incongruous remarks:

"I beg that my observations on the New England character may be taken, not as the hasty impressions received during a few days' or weeks' residence in Boston; but as the final result of my observations on this interesting people, both in their own states, and in other portions of the Union." — Vol. I, p. 127.

How could this writer suppose, that any one who read his book with common attention, would be deceived by so paltry an attempt to represent himself as having had any other opportunities for observation, than what were afforded him by his residence in Boston, and his ride of a week through the country, during which his impressions must at least have been as hasty as in the metropolis.

In his account of the New England character there is, however, almost as little consistency as truth. There appears from a great

part of this book to be no consecutiveness or coherence of thought in the writer's mind; and we advert to this fact the more readily, because it is the best excuse that can be made for such a publication. One would judge him to have no power of seeing the bearing of one proposition upon another. He is continually entangling himself among words the meaning of which he does not comprehend. There is indeed a prevailing uniformity of character throughout his work, but it is produced by consistent bad temper. To exemplify the incongruity of his ideas, we will quote a specimen or two of the praise, which he has mingled with his abuse while defaming a whole people.

"In no other part of the globe, not even in Scotland, is morality at so high a premium" as in New England. — Vol. I. p. 94.

The meaning is, that in no other part of the globe are good morals so highly esteemed as in New England. The necessary inference is, that no other people are so moral as the New Englanders.

"Their Puritan descent has stamped a character on the New Englanders, which nearly two centuries have done little to efface. Among their own countrymen, they are distinguished for their enterprise, prudence, frugality, order, and intelligence." — Vol. I. p. 118.

"There is the same attachment to religion among the New Englanders as among the Scotch." — Vol. I. p. 125.

"A New Englander is far more a being of reason than of impulse." — Vol. I. p. 94.

These words are uttered by way of disparagement, — a fact which illustrates the confusion of the writer's mind. He is evidently not aware, that to act from reason and not from impulse is the highest character that can be given to man.

Mr. Hamilton's work is essentially a book of opinions and not of facts; and the value of his opinions may be estimated from the circumstance that he has no power, either of defining his ideas, or of bringing them together in any proper relations to each other. He presents us only with a series of half-formed, confused, contradictory notions, the true character of which is partially disguised, sometimes by the coolest dogmatism, and sometimes by a vulgar smartness of style. A passage on the page from which we made the last extract has just caught our eye, that is a fair example of his mode of reasoning. He is trying to ridicule a sermon, which he professes to have heard from one of our most eminent clergymen. "The inference that men should pray because the trees blossom and the birds sing," he says, "is about as little cogent in the theory, as the experience of mankind has proved it in practice." The true reasoning which he has thus endeavoured to misrepresent,





and which, at the same time, it is apparent that he did not comprehend, is at once the most simple and convincing. It is this: Men should adore God, because the beauty and loveliness of his works manifest his goodness. It is of this plain general proposition, involved in the particular cases which he has put of the singing of birds and blossoming of trees, that he immediately affirms with his usual coarse flippancy: "The *sequitur* would be quite as good, were it asserted that men should wear spectacles because bears eat horse-flesh, and ostriches lay eggs in the sand."

In illustrating the incapacity of this writer to connect thoughts together with any coherent meaning, we need not wander from the pages open before us. Many others, however, in the two volumes would be as much to our purpose. "Boston," he says, "is the metropolis of Unitarianism." Unitarianism, he adds, "appeals to human reason in every step of its progress, and while it narrows the compass of miracle, enlarges that of demonstration." The word "human" in the phrase "human reason" is superfluous. Whatever among men appeals to reason, must appeal to "human" reason, as man has no other reason to which it can appeal. Unitarianism, then, according to Mr. Hamilton, appeals to reason "*in every step of its progress.*" The last words are so ambiguous as to be nearly unmeaning; but we do not perceive that any thing could have been intended by the whole proposition, except that Unitarianism, in calling men to receive its doctrines, addresses only their reason. If this be a distinctive character of Unitarianism, it is little to the credit of other forms of religious faith. The sole method, by which men may be properly convinced of the truth of any doctrines, is by addressing their reason. To what else should the appeal be made? — to their folly — to their imagination — or to their passions? Unitarianism, he goes on, "narrows the compass of miracle;" "it enlarges the compass of demonstration." The meaning of this antithesis we cannot explain, nor, we are well persuaded, could the writer himself. Perhaps some idea was confusedly floating in his mind which might have been thus expressed: "Unitarianism admits fewer miracles than some other forms of faith, the Roman Catholic for example, and insists more rigidly upon proof." But if this was what he was aiming to say, his language makes no near approximation to it. He proceeds, with a vulgar attempt at wit, to affirm, that "Jonathan chose his religion, as one does a hat, because it fitted him." Jonathan, however, he had said on the page before, is to be "moved only by argument"; and this seems to be a sufficient account of his choosing a religion "which appeals to reason in every step of its progress." But some other solution of his choice, though neither we nor the author may be able to tell what, is implied in the sentence just quoted;

for he goes on to express his confident anticipation, that when Jonathan's "head has attained its full size," that is, we suppose, when his understanding is properly enlarged, he will "adopt a better and more orthodox covering," meaning faith. Mr. Hamilton's notion appears to be, that an enlargement of the understanding leads men to disregard their reason.

Nothing but the author's previous reputation would have led us to take so much notice as we already have done of a production, which, as a book of travels, is worthless, and, as a work containing opinions and reasoning, altogether contemptible. We will, however, proceed a little further.

A great part of these volumes is occupied by what the writer meant as discussions of various important topics connected with this country, such as the policy of protecting American manufactures, the state and prospects of American literature, the existence of slavery, and the probable continuance of the union of the States. We shall not enter into argument with him upon any of these topics; but will quote, as a fair specimen of his ability to reason upon such themes, his attempt to prove, that "an Agrarian law," by which (using language with his customary incorrectness) he means a law for the equal partition of all property, will soon take effect in this country. Our readers may suspect us of a joke; we assure them that we report Mr. Hamilton correctly, and that he is *as grave, as earnest, and as fairly out*, in maintaining his opinion, as any man who ever advanced an absurdity. But they shall judge for themselves, though we must give a somewhat long extract. He is speaking of what has been called the "Working Men's Party," whom he, with his usual fondness for slang, calls "the Workies." Some of this party, he says,

"boldly advocate the introduction of an AGRARIAN LAW, and a periodical division of property. These unquestionably constitute the *extrême gauche* of the Worky Parliament; but still they only follow out the principles of their less violent neighbours, and eloquently dilate on the justice and propriety of every individual being equally supplied with food and clothing; on the monstrous iniquity of one man riding in his carriage while another walks on foot, and, after his drive, discussing a bottle of Champagne, while many of his neighbours are shamefully compelled to be content with the pure element. Only equalize property, they say, and neither would drink Champagne or water, but both would have brandy, a consummation worthy of centuries of struggle to attain.

"All this is nonsense undoubtedly; nor do I say that this party, though strong in New-York, is yet so numerous or so widely diffused as to create immediate alarm. In the elections, however, for the civic offices of the city, their influence is strongly felt; and





there can be no doubt, that as population becomes more dense, and the supply of labor shall equal or exceed the demand for it, the strength of this party must be enormously augmented. Their ranks will always be recruited by the needy, the idle, and the profligate, and, like a rolling snow-ball, it will gather strength and volume as it proceeds, until at length it comes down thundering with the force and desolation of an avalanche.

"This event may be distant, but it is not the less certain on that account. It is nothing to say, that the immense extent of fertile territory yet to be occupied by an unborn population will delay the day of ruin. It will delay, but it cannot prevent it. The traveller at the source of the Mississippi, in the very heart of the American Continent, may predict with perfect certainty, that, however protracted the wanderings of the rivulet at his foot, it must reach the ocean at last. In proportion as the nearer lands are occupied, it is very evident that the region to which emigration will be directed must of necessity be more distant. The pressure of population therefore will continue to augment in the Atlantic States, and the motives to removal become gradually weaker. Indeed, at the present rate of extension, the circle of occupied territory must before many generations be so enormously enlarged, that emigration will be confined wholly to the Western States. Then, and not till then, will come the trial of the American constitution; and, until that trial has been passed, it is mere nonsense to appeal to its stability.

"Nor is this period of trial apparently very distant. At the present ratio of increase, the population of the United States doubles itself in about twenty-four years, so that in half a century it will amount to about fifty millions, of which ten millions will be slaves, or at all events a degraded caste, cut off from all the rights and privileges of citizenship. Before this period, it is very certain that the pressure of the population, on the means of subsistence, especially in the Atlantic States, will be very great. The price of labor will have fallen, while that of the necessaries of life must be prodigiously enhanced. The poorer and more suffering class will want the means of emigrating to a distant region of unoccupied territory. Poverty and misery will be abroad; and the great majority of the people will be without property of any kind, except the thews and sinews with which God has endowed them; they will choose legislators under the immediate pressure of privation; and if, in such circumstances, any man can anticipate security of property, his conclusion must be founded, I suspect, rather on the wishes of a sanguine temperament, than on any rational calculation of probabilities." * * * * *

"There will be no occasion, however, for convulsion or violence. The *Worky* convention will only have to choose representatives of their own principles, in order to accomplish a general system of spoliation, in the most legal and constitutional manner. It is not even necessary that a majority of the federal legislature should concur in this. It is competent to the government of each state to dis-

pose of the property within their own limits as they think proper, and whenever a *numerical* majority of the people shall be in favor of an Agrarian law, there exists no counteracting influence to prevent, or even to retard, its adoption." — Vol. I. pp. 162 — 165.

The evils anticipated by Mr. Hamilton, will not, however, in his view, owe their origin essentially to the right of universal suffrage, which he thinks, somewhat erroneously, exists throughout the greater part of this country. They have their cause, according to him, in the very nature of a *representative* government. "It is only," he says, "when it *ceases to be expressly representative*, and stands on a firmer basis than mere popular favor, that a government can acquire a positive and determinate character, and be recognised as an influence distinct from that of national opinion." (Vol. I, p. 197.) That is to say, so long as a government is in the proper sense of the word *representative*, it will be the mere organ of the opinions, and of course, of the will, passions, and supposed interests of the nation, that is, of a majority of the nation; and what they think, must be wrong, and what they will, must be bad.

Passing over, however, for the present, the last remark of the author, we will now restate his reasoning a little more concisely, if not more clearly, than he has done himself. It is as follows.

As the population of the United States becomes more crowded, the class of those destitute of property will constitute the majority of citizens. But as those who make the laws are elected by the majority, the laws will be conformed to the will of the majority, that is, to the will of those who are destitute of property. Now as all men desire to obtain the advantages which property affords, the necessary result of this future but certain state of society will be the passing of a law for the equalization of property.

Mr. Hamilton calculates that this event will take place in about half a century, when the population of this country will amount to about fifty millions. Though he says there will be no occasion for convulsion or violence, yet he can hardly believe that this general spoliation of property will be made without resistance; — that the "avalanche" will bring "desolation" and "ruin" without the destruction of life. He probably, therefore, looks forward to something like a general massacre of the children or grand-children of the friends to whom he became so much attached in Boston and elsewhere. A community of women, he must think it likely, will follow a community of goods. All capital, and of course all productive industry, will be destroyed. Hard labor, being one of the evils of poverty from which the majority have determined to free themselves, will of course be submitted to only when, their plunder being exhausted, they are driven to it, like our native savages, by the stern necessity of providing for the support of life. Thus the fifty mil-

lions of human beings, whose fate this author undertakes to determine, will inevitably become an enormous horde of robbers, pirates, ravishers, and murderers, whom it will be the interest and duty of all other nations to extirpate. Nor, with the principles and state of society existing among these degraded outlaws, will their extirpation be difficult; since, where the doctrine of equality in all things is so fully acted upon, none will submit to the authority of a commander and the hardships of military discipline, or suffer himself to be selected to be shot at or sabred by an invading army, when he feels that there is no justice in his being shot at or sabred before any one else. The race, then, being destroyed, *representative* government, the source of all these tremendous evils, will be done away. The country may, perhaps, be re-peopled by a better population from the crowded jails and overflowing poor-houses of England; Ireland may pour over it her starving millions, and London, Manchester, and Birmingham disgorge themselves upon it. Some future Duke of Cumberland may be sent out as the stock of an *hereditary* race of monarchs, with a sufficient number of the younger sons of true "conservative" noblemen, to found an *hereditary* body of legislators, as wise and enlightened as the present conservative peers of Great Britain; and the true Saturnian age may at last commence in this unhappy land.

If it were not for the dull malignity, the utter want of sympathy, not merely with the inhabitants of this country, but with human nature in general, which the writer discovers in this specimen of political speculation, we should hardly be led to give it a more serious notice. But in presenting his melancholy views of the future condition of this country, he is as earnest and dogmatic as if his enthusiasm were excited by the prospect. Let us then attend to his reasoning. When, according to him, the anticipated period arrives, such are our institutions of government, that the majority, "the poorer and more suffering class" "will only have to choose representatives of their own principles, in order to accomplish a general spoliation of property." Mr. Hamilton here proceeds upon two assumptions, one that the poorer classes (a great majority in every European nation) are generally disposed to seize on the property of the rich; and the other, that they can be restrained from doing this solely by the absence of a representative government. The cause which prevents the twelve millions of poor in Great Britain, the greater part of whom depend for their support on daily labor or daily charity, from seizing upon the whole enormous wealth of the country, and making an equal partition of it among the inhabitants, is not, according to him, any moral and religious principle, nor any innate sense of right, nor any dread of crime, nor any feeling nor sentiment whatever, nor the strong ac-

tion of established usages, nor any imperfect notion that private wealth is capital by which the poor as well as the rich are supported, nor any glimmering of the truth — a truth pretty effectively taught by experiments on a small scale — that just so far as the rights of property are disregarded, a nation is relapsing into that barbarous state in which force is the only law, nor any inability to agree together in their plans of plunder, nor any want of physical force; — but the sole cause is, that, the government of England not being a proper representative government, these twelve millions, ready prepared as they are for robbery, cannot yet carry an act through Parliament to legalize their design. They are stopped by this barrier, as the ferocious mob of Paris in the days of the revolution were sometimes restrained by a tri-colored ribbon. Though despising all other laws of God or man, they are scrupulous about having an act of Parliament in their favor. — There is a general problem which we would propose for Mr. Hamilton's consideration. What are the causes, that, from the beginning of the world to the present time, the poor as a body have never seized upon the property of the rich as a body? We have in the preceding sentences suggested some hints for its solution. When he is able to give a complete answer, we think he will perceive that this country is in no *peculiar* danger of such a catastrophe. — Where in any other country are the interests of the different classes of society so intimately blended together? Where else are the limits which separate them so confused, changing, and undefinable? Where else are so many motives and facilities held out to every one to improve his condition? Where else is there so much action upon men's minds to prevent that reckless improvidence which, under governments like those of the United States, is the only essential cause of abject poverty? Where else are the equal civil rights of every individual not *nominally* but *actually* so protected by the law? It is idle to ascribe the existing prosperity of this country to its small population and extensive territory. A disciple of Malthus should know, that it is improvidence pressing upon the *actual* means of subsistence, without reference to the *possible* means that any country may have at command, which, according to him, is the main source of the miseries of poverty. We add another, — tyranny; — the oppressions and extortions of governments and privileged classes. From the latter cause we are free and shall continue so. From the former also, we are free, and shall continue free, so far as the tendency to improvidence may be counteracted by every motive and excitement which the constitution of society can afford.

We make one remark more to illustrate Mr. Hamilton's entire incapacity for reasoning: "It is competent," he says, "to

the government of each state to dispose of the property within *their own limits* as *they* think proper," meaning, we presume, to dispose of *all property belonging to the citizens of the state* as *it* thinks proper. It is on this proposition that his whole argument rests, and it admits of no sense, not altogether and not obviously false. The word "competent" is the very pivot of his reasoning; and he assuredly had no clear notion of any meaning in using it. What could he intend by it? Was it that the government of each state has a moral right to dispose in any way of the property of any of its citizens? Certainly not. Was it that the government of each state has a conventional right to do so, founded upon the written constitution by which it is established? Supposing the question to be fairly laid before the writer, he would of course assert that this was not his meaning. The powers of no other governments are so jealously limited as those of our own. In what then does their supposed "competency" consist? Their "competency," as he calls it, to pass what he conceives of under the name of an "Agrarian law," is the same as their competency to enact that every man shall walk on all fours, under pain of death. Was it then his meaning, that those governments representing the majority of the country, and this majority fifty years hence being about to consist of banditti, they will respectively be the organs of a force "competent" to effect the spoliation? Undoubtedly in this sense they may be called "competent" to plunder. But the United States are still in no worse condition, than Great Britain, or even a country, where law is maintained by an hereditary emperor as paternal as Francis of Austria, or as savage as Nicholas of Russia. Whenever robbers possess the superiority of physical force, they are undoubtedly "competent" to rob; whether they do or do not indulge themselves in the luxury of choosing representatives. But this sort of competency could not be what the writer meant, because "the general system of spoliation" which he contemplates, is to be accomplished "in the most legal and constitutional manner."

But Mr. Hamilton, apparently having some misgivings, that his reasoning was not quite sound, proceeds to confirm it by authority. "I have," he says, "had the advantage of conversing with many of the most eminent Americans of the Union, on the future prospects of their country; and I certainly remember none who did not admit that a period of trial, such as that I have ventured to describe, is, according to all human calculation, inevitable." (Vol. I, p. 165.) We have no hesitation in saying, that Mr. Hamilton has committed some extraordinary mistake in making this assertion, and grossly libelled the good sense of those whose opinions he professes to quote. That his assertion is altogether incorrect, appears not only from what every intelligent American must know to be its

entire incredibility, but from his own evidence, so far as that is of any weight; for his next sentence begins thus: "Many reckoned much on education as a means of safety." Of course the "many," who looked to education as a means of safety, did *not* regard the evil as inevitable. But the whole of this representation is erroneous, as we have little doubt are most of his other reports of confidential communications. We have reason to believe that Mr. Hamilton, while in this country, took very little pains to learn the opinions of well-informed men, or to obtain the information which such men might have afforded him. On what he happened to hear it is evident that he put his own interpretation; and a rapid process of assimilation appears to be going on in his mind, by which whatever he hears or observes is converted into nutriment for his prejudices and contributes to their growth.

The purpose of this work, and the manner in which that purpose is executed, give it a certain degree of importance. Its purpose is to strengthen the prejudices in England against representative forms of government, in order to prevent a nearer approximation to them in that country. The manner in which this is attempted is by misrepresenting their influence in the United States, and by defaming the condition of society in this country. While circumstances exist throughout the civilized world, requiring every effort of wise and well-intentioned men to direct them to good, Mr. Hamilton has put himself forward to do such amount of mischief as may be in his power, to mislead, as far as he is able, the judgment of his readers, to strengthen prejudices, and to inflame party and national animosities. The temper which pervades the whole book is thoroughly bad. With the exception of certain individuals, by whom he was treated with courtesy and kindness, nothing in this country escapes censure, unless in a few cases in which some reluctant, half-retracted, damnatory praise is extorted from him, — praise which commonly sours into a sneer. In general nothing is as it ought to be, and every thing is growing worse. He is evidently a man to be put out of humor at the suggestion, that so many millions of human beings may escape debasement and wretchedness. He is anxious to prove, that they are miserable at present, "with all the appliances of enjoyment within their reach;" that they show this in "their countenances furrowed by care;" and that some "strange curse" (strange indeed!) "has gone forth against them which says, 'Ye shall not enjoy'"*

Of the temper with which this book is written, we shall produce only one more specimen. He describes in language of the bitterest reprobation, and with exaggerations and misstatements which can only do harm, the evils attendant on the existence of slavery

* Vol. I. p. 142. Vol. II. p. 126.

in a portion of the United States. Speaking of a slave-auction, he says: "The man who wants an excuse for misanthropy, will nowhere find better reason for hating and despising his species." Perhaps so; — we only remark that Mr. Hamilton was much too eager to find such excuses while in this country. Concerning the terrible evil of slavery, there can be little difference of opinion among Christians, philanthropists, or enlightened politicians. But he says: "It may not be a crime, — it probably ought not to be charged as one, — in the American people, that slavery still exists in by far the larger portion of the territory of the Union." (Vol. II. p. 112.) He remarks further: "It is only fair to state, that, during the whole course of my tour, I never conversed with any American on the subject of slavery without his at once admitting the magnitude of the evil. The planters uniformly speak of it as a noxious exhalation by which the whole atmosphere is poisoned." (p. 115.) Again he says: "I admit that the question of the abolition of slavery in the United States is involved in peculiar difficulties, nor do I pretend to suggest any project by which it may be safely and even remotely effected." (p. 113.) These are Mr. Hamilton's opinions, for which we do not make ourselves responsible. The last of them proceeds from the disposition manifested throughout his work to represent every thing in the United States as incapable of improvement, as, on the contrary, proceeding from bad to worse, — to anarchy and massacre. "My own conviction," he says, "is, that slavery in this country can only be eradicated by some great and terrible convulsion. The sword is evidently suspended; it will fall at last." (p. 116.)

To the topic of slavery in this country Mr. Hamilton repeatedly recurs. We leave it to every one to consider how a a man of common human feelings would regard such a picture as he presents, and such a future as he anticipates. But what says Mr. Hamilton: *I trust I do not write upon this painful subject in an insulting spirit;* (p. 74.) — and what must we think of a man who believes it necessary to make such a disavowal?

Let us state a parallel case. Let us suppose, that a year since an American should have written an account of England; and, founding his statements upon unquestionable evidence, — here the parallel for a moment fails, — upon the reports of committees of Parliament, and upon the published works of respectable physicians, should have described the squalid misery, the physical and moral debasement of a large portion of the operatives throughout her manufacturing towns; living "upon the minimum of the means of life by which existence may be prolonged;" toiling through it to perish in poor-houses; habitually, when worn out by extreme labor and want of proper food, stimulating themselves

with gin; crowded together, when released from the confinement of the manufactory, in filthy apartments "without distinction of age or sex, and careless of all decency;" inhaling disease in every breath; and with all natural affection destroyed by utter wretchedness, — so as to send their children, their young children, to toil sometimes "nearly forty consecutive hours twice a week, beside laboring from twelve to fourteen hours on those days in which night work is not expected."* Let us suppose him to have described those children, when staggering into involuntary sleep, driven to their task by blows, and to have given an account of the consequences of this task, the distortion of their bones, the twisting of their joints, constant disease, death by slow torture, and, worse, far worse than all, the annihilation of every thing intellectual and moral in the human being. He might have done all this, without exaggerating a word, upon sworn and uncontradicted evidence, printed by order of the House of Commons. Then let us suppose him to have concluded or introduced his horrible detail with saying, that he trusted he had no purpose of INSULTING the English nation in making it. — We do not know what the party for whom Mr. Hamilton wrote may think of *him*; but we do know what would be thought of such a writer as we have imagined by every party in this country.†

If any English friend were to ask us in conversation to give a candid opinion, how far this book of Mr. Hamilton's is to be trust-

* We have used, in speaking upon this subject, the past rather than the present time, because a bill was, we believe, carried through Parliament at the last session, enacting that children under fourteen years of age should not be compelled to labor in a factory more than eight hours in the twenty-four. Whatever of this sort may have been done, is a matter of rejoicing; but it is evident that, for the distress which has been described, such remedies are but superficial.

† In connexion with the subject of slavery there is a story told of Mr. Jefferson, which we are not disposed to shock our readers by quoting. The amount of it is, that a daughter of Mr. Jefferson by a slave was publicly sold as a slave at New Orleans. It is connected with a general assertion respecting that distinguished man, which again we shall not quote, but which we should have been slow to believe, till the evidence was before us, that any person pretending to the character of a gentleman would have made. Of the story to which we have referred we may say, that we have always been politically connected with the party in opposition to Mr. Jefferson; that perhaps there never was an individual in any country whose private moral character was made the subject of more bitter, searching, and public scrutiny; that we have heard and seen many stories to his disadvantage, some true, it is likely, and some false; but this story, which a stranger just visiting the country has, it seems, picked up, we never heard or saw before, nor can we find an individual to whom it was not equally unknown. It is, intrinsically, all but absolutely incredible. Undoubtedly, however, Mr. Hamilton can and will produce satisfactory evidence of its truth; for, if he cannot, no pilloried libeller ever deserved his situation more richly than the reporter of this story.

ed, we should reply, that the average of truth and fairness to be found in it is about the same which might be expected in a sour political pamphlet, written to effect a particular purpose, the author of which should regard his readers as having but little knowledge concerning the topics of which he treats. Throughout the work there is nowhere an approach to the views and feelings of an enlightened, candid, and philosophical mind, of an individual truly and wisely interested in the prospects of his race.

There are evils, great evils, in every country, — vice and crime are everywhere to be found. We Americans are not exempt from the common lot; we do not live in Arcadia. At the present period we are passing through dark days. But when our condition is compared with that of other nations, it is indisputable, that the state of things in this country is by far the most favorable to the happiness of men, and to their moral and intellectual advancement, which the world has yet known. The responsibility imposed upon us is in consequence great; and we trust, that, whatever changes may take place, a large portion of the country will acquit itself worthily. We rejoice that our governments can do so little harm; that their good or bad administration is, comparatively speaking, a matter of so small importance. We regard it as their peculiar distinction, and one of the peculiar blessings of the country; a distinction and a blessing which we have hardly yet learned to estimate aright, and which a foreigner, and especially an Englishman, can scarcely comprehend; — for in England the government is looked up to, as able to do all good and remedy all evil. Yet much depends upon our statesmen of the better class; and it is earnestly to be desired that they may be high-minded and uncompromising, remote from paltry intrigue, and free from those artifices to gain momentary popularity which every man of sense sees through and despises. There is no office under our government, not even the highest, which is now a very splendid lure for ambition; but there is an opportunity here, as elsewhere, of acquiring historical reputation, the only kind of fame worth a wise man's thought. Great interests at the present moment are at stake; and it would be a noble spectacle to see men come forward with such principles and talents as to control the current of events. The experiment, — there is no question about it, — is to be tried in this country, whether men can live happily as freemen, or whether they must be governed in a greater or less degree by hereditary power, accidentally possessed by certain classes and individuals. So far the experiment has been successful; but it is not finished. We augur no ill as to the result; but we know of no great blessing that man can secure without strenuous efforts and a strong feeling of responsibility. It is an experiment in which all the wise and

good, all philosophers, all patriots, and all friends of our race throughout the civilized world, have a deep concern. Should it fail, the best hopes that may be entertained for mankind must be abandoned. Whoever among us, from any personal or party interest or passion, may contribute to render it in any degree unsuccessful, is a traitor, not only against his own country, but against human nature. We must learn to think of ourselves, not proudly, but wisely; not to imagine that our blessings will be lasting, whatever we may be or do; but to feel that we are acting, not merely for ourselves, but in the common cause of mankind. A. N.







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North American Review
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O Andrews Norton.

ART. IV. — *A Memoir of* JAMES JACKSON, JR., M. D. *With Extracts from his Letters to his Father; and Medical Cases, collected by him.* By JAMES JACKSON, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic in Harvard University; and Physician of the Massachusetts General Hospital. Boston. 1835. 8vo. pp. 444.

THIS book has not been published, but printed only for private distribution; and we should not have thought ourselves at liberty to make it the subject of an article without the permission of the author, which we have solicited and obtained. We were ourselves strongly affected by the reading of the Memoir,— though the writer of this article had not the pleasure of personally knowing the subject of it, — and we believed that we could hardly render a better service to the community than by contributing to make some of its characteristics more generally known. It is a beautiful, simple, true exhibition of moral worth, of correct sentiments and principles of action, of parental and filial confidence and friendship, of the generous ardor of a young man giving himself up without reserve to the duties which he regarded as assigned to him by Providence, and of the religious composure and self-command, with which a parent, fully sensible of the extent of his deprivation, can yet retrace the virtues of such a son, in the trust that he has only resigned them to the keeping of God. From much that appears around us, it affords relief and encouragement to turn to such examples of private and domestic virtue, to contemplate those rich veins of worth running below the surface, which, as in the present case, are occasionally laid open to view, and to recollect, that, whatever evils may exist in our community, it still produces such parents and such sons.

To young men, especially of the two professions, the medical and the clerical, in which the possession or the want of ability, extensive and correct knowledge, skill, and faithfulness, most affect the well-being of others, this Memoir affords an admirable lesson. No right-minded young man can read it without such sympathy, as will excite him to more strenuous exertions. Very glad should we be to believe, that those who have chosen the profession of clergymen were in general possessed with as strong a feeling, as the young physician whose loss our

society deplores, of the necessity of thorough, well-directed study, of intellectual preparation for their duties, and with an equal sense of the uncertainty and worthlessness of superficial information and merely traditionary opinions. There is great deficiency without doubt in both professions; and so far as a single example may tend to correct it, none can do so more effectually than that here presented.

A large proportion of the most religious books are not of the number of those which assume that name. On the contrary, of books called religious, very many are founded upon false conceptions of our nature, of the religious character, of our duties and trials, of the world actually existing around us, of life and death. We are presented with views so partial, distorted, and exaggerated, that the religious man of the author's imagination becomes a being at once impossible and displeasing, very unlike the good, who are to be found in the real intercourse of the world. The most religious books, whether they bear that name or not, are those which impress us most deeply with a feeling of our responsibilities in the common offices of life; of the unending nature of moral and intellectual improvement; of the instability of our present form of being, and the certainty of higher modes of existence; of the imperishable character of all true excellence; of the deep remembrances and intimate affections that connect us with the world to come, by ties as real as those which bind us to the present; of the efficacy of the principles and dispositions, founded on a belief of the moral nature of God, and the immortality of those we love, as well as our own, to give moral power, to animate and console; and of the worth of those sympathies, which unite us with the friends whom God has made near to us, with whatever can enjoy or suffer, and with Him who is the source, strength, and hope of all goodness and love. The influence of the Memoir before us we regard as truly religious.

But we ought rather to occupy the limits within which we are confined, by extracts from the Memoir itself, than by our own remarks. It begins thus;—

"The following pages contain a memoir of the life of my late son, James Jackson, Junior, M. D., with extracts from his letters, and a selection from the medical cases collected by him, principally in Paris. I have been induced to print these cases by the solicitation of those, who knew how he had collected them. I have been induced to write the memoir in consequence of the sug-







gestion of those who knew something of him, and whose opinions I respect. In some points the task has been grateful to me; sad, though it may seem, for a father. I thank God, that I have been able to maintain my cheerfulness, and to attend to the common occupations of life, since the deplorable loss which I suffered in his departure from this world. But every hour has he been in my mind. In every occupation, in almost every conversation, however little others could see the connexion, his image has been before me. It has been a beautiful image, and has not checked any pleasure, nor even any gayety, in which I thought he could have joined.

"Under any circumstances I might seem an improper person to give his history, and my statements may be deemed scarcely worthy of credit. Who will believe that I shall be impartial? I can say, however, that I would not willingly be guilty of exaggeration, if it were only from a respect to the love of truth, which formed the most distinguishing trait in his character. He loved me as few sons love their fathers. Of this I have had ample and constant proofs. But he loved truth better, and would not subscribe to any opinion because it was mine, though he was quite willing, in his conduct, to submit to my direction and control.

"But if I draw a fancy picture, while I design to paint the character of my son, if that presents a young man who devoted his time most assiduously to the acquisition of useful knowledge, who cultivated at the same time his best moral affections, and acted from the highest love of virtue, and who thereby secured the friendship of the wise and good, the fiction at least may have some good influence on the young and inexperienced. At least it may lead them to reflect on the immutable connexion between virtue and happiness.

"The subject of this story was not indeed rewarded by long life. But in this age will it be maintained that long life is the greatest of blessings? This is a topic on which I shall not enlarge; but I will only say for myself, which I do most sincerely, that I would not have added a year to my son's life by an habitual and allowed indulgence in a single vice.

"The history of my son's life is very simple, and it may be told very briefly. He was born on the 15th January, 1810, was graduated at the University in Cambridge in 1828, and then engaged in the study of medicine. This he did under my direction and as my pupil. He continued as such till the April of 1831, and during this time he attended the medical lectures of our University, and saw the practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital. In the spring, 1831, he went to Paris, where he arrived in May, and remained till July, 1833, except during a visit of six months to Great Britain and Ireland, in the spring and summer of 1832. He

reached home at the end of the summer, 1833, and was graduated as Doctor of Medicine in our University in February, 1834. He was now prepared to engage in practice, and took rooms for himself in Franklin-Place. He was thus brought to the starting-place of active life, and under circumstances the most flattering and the most grateful, when he was arrested in his course. Exactly at this point he was arrested. His arrangements being made, he sent an advertisement to the public papers, which appeared on the 5th of March, and on that day he was taken sick, so as to lodge at my house, instead of occupying the rooms which he had just announced as his residence. This sickness was his last, and he died on the 27th of the same month, being in his 25th year." — pp. 3 – 5.

After this general account, the author of the Memoir proceeds to enter into the details of the life of his son. As a boy he was lively, social, goodhumored and generous. "His schoolmaster loved him; but had to punish him continually for the sin of laughing, of which he could not break him however."

"Once, when a little boy, he had kept at the head of his class for two or three days, and then a younger boy got above him. I reproached him for permitting this. But he said, with great *naïveté*, that the other boy 'ought to be at the head sometimes.' I hardly gave him credit at the moment for this generous wish for the gratification of his rival, but his companions in later life will agree with me in believing, that it was the result of that interest in the happiness of others, which he manifested more and more strongly as long as he lived." — p. 7.

At College, the routine of studies did not fix his attention. "He never attained a distinguished rank in his class by exact attention to his collegiate duties;" yet, what is not inconsistent with the fact, he "was really storing his mind with valuable knowledge." Immediately upon leaving College, he entered with uncommon ardor upon his professional studies. We must pass over the particulars of his assiduity and success while he remained in this country. When just past twenty-one years of age, he went to complete his education at Paris. The Memoir furnishes us with an extract from a letter of his father written upon this occasion, and with his reply. It will be recollected that we are giving an account of a book not generally accessible, and we cannot better occupy our pages than by quoting both.

"*Extract from my Letter to him, April* 9, 1831.

"'I look forward with sanguine hopes of benefit from the opportunities you will have. I feel satisfied that you will not omit to avail yourself of them. It is this hope of benefit to you which reconciles me to your absence, for I have already begun to look to you as my most interesting companion for the remainder of my days. As to the hazards to which you are exposed, I certainly do not disregard them; yet I shall not allow a regard to them to make me unhappy. At least, I think so now. There is a risk of life, — and it would indeed alter the aspect of my future days, if I did not hope to have you by my side, and to leave you behind me in this world. But this is the smallest risk by far. Whether we pass a few short years together in this world is comparatively of little consequence. Whether we meet in a better world is of immeasurable importance. This depends on ourselves; — on the strict regard to morality which we both maintain; — a morality in Dr. Holyoke's sense, which includes piety, — a regard to our Maker, as well as to ourselves and fellow-men. Now I am not insensible to the temptations, to which young and old are exposed in Paris and London. I can think of them till I tremble. But my trembling is stilled by the confidence I place in you. This confidence is sincere and strong. It is not unlimited, but it is as great as it can be in any young man. I know that your fondness for society, arising from the best feelings, is very strong; but I feel assured that you know how to control it, — and that your principles are strong and of the best kind. I shall not therefore allow myself to be anxious; and it is more to tell you this, than to insinuate any cautions, that I have been led into this long statement of my views and feelings. In temptation, I think you will first think of home, — and then cast your eyes higher, to the home we all ultimately hope for, and to the Father who is better than any earthly parent. I referred to the dangers of society; — I wish to add, that among men of the world, and I may say such gentlemen as a traveller meets, there is a sort of presumption conveyed in conversation, that no one feels bound very strictly by the rules of morality. Now one need not turn knight-errant, nor missionary, to beat down the obnoxious principles thus indirectly maintained. But, on the other hand, I have never found any society, in which I needed to remain, in which a gentleman was bound to assent to such principles, or in which he might not declare his dissent from them, when he was compelled to speak of them directly. In short, a man never loses, but almost always gains with the worst men, by pursuing an honorable and virtuous course. The share of reputation, which you have yourself gained, while leading a quiet and, you may almost say, a secluded life, shows you that a man gains reputation fully in proportion to his merits. Some persons must

see your course, and by them, even while they do not think of doing so, it is published and fixes your character. Not that a regard to character is the highest motive to action, but I was led to speak of it in another view, viz. that a regard to it in the eyes of those about you, need not lead you to make sacrifices to their vices and follies.'

"The letter from which the foregoing extract is made, reached my son in New York, on his arrival there, after sailing upon the Hudson, and visiting the Trenton Falls. In his reply, of which the greater part follows, he refers to the scenes, in which his mind had been delightfully engaged.

"'*New York, April* 15, 1831.

"'My Dear Father,

"'My heart beats, and my eyes fill, and my hopes are brightened, and my resolutions are strengthened, as I advance in reading your kind letter of affection and advice. Be assured I will not neglect the opportunities which I am about to enjoy. My constant prayer is to God, that he will give me strength, moral and mental, to improve them to the utmost. I have already, some time since, said to you, that, were it not that I may with every reason expect to be in your society and under your guidance again on my return, I would on no account visit Europe. I feel and know that my opportunities for improvement during any two years, which I shall be absent, would be much greater at home than any I can obtain abroad; — but both have their peculiar advantages, and, trusting in the mercy and providence of God, who has already poured upon me so many blessings, I feel a confident hope that I may enjoy both without foregoing either.

"'You next speak, my dear father, of the temptations abroad to young men. I, too, can and do think, and have oftentimes thought of them, till I tremble. I feel myself to be weak, weaker than I should be. I am not phlegmatic; — I have not yet learned to be master of myself; — I am yet, too often, much too often, the slave of circumstances. I feel that this is to be the toil and study of my life, to become master of myself. I am learning each day, more and more, that it is the education of the immortal part, which should and must demand man's most serious and untiring attention. I begin to feel too, that it is his highest happiness to cultivate it. I see the difficulties with which I must contend, and I feel deeply conscious of my moral weakness; — but again, I feel a sort of confidence in remembering that the Creator has given to man strength to resist all moral evil, and in hoping and praying that he will enable me to exert it. The future, with all, especially with a young man, is uncertain; — but for all that is important it is in our hands; — an awful responsibility, indeed, but yet ennobling

and encouraging. One thought is most cheering, — we may depend upon it with security, — in the right conduct of the future, we have the certain aid and assistance of our all-powerful and benevolent Father, who will point us to the right path and safely conduct us over it, however rugged, if we will but open our eyes to see, and our hearts to accept, instead of blindly refusing his kind offers. My dear father, this is no affectation; — it is no unmeaning rhapsody; — my mind for some time has been becoming more and more convinced of the *essential importance* of these subjects, and I promise you the last week has not been spent in vain; — not only has my mind been improving; — my heart too is better for what I have seen; — it is good for me to have been the spectator of these majestic works of the Deity in the natural world around us. My heart has been warmed with a sense of his benevolence, and my mind opened anew and more strongly, to a conviction of his power and greatness.

"'In anticipating my future career in life, my mind is filled with what? I can tell you, for I have spent much time during the last three months, in a serious consideration of the subject, and feel that I have arrived at somewhat more definite views than I had previously entertained. I would divide all the objects of my aim and efforts into two classes, — the essentials and the desirables; — and in a few words they are these. Among the first, are a moral character, in the fullest acceptation of the term; or in other words a life of virtue, so spent as shall be acceptable to God, and render me fit to enjoy the blessings of the virtuous; an honorable and useful exercise of my profession; — these two will perhaps include the only remaining essential, viz. such a situation in society, as to p.operty, respectability, and so forth, as every young man brought up, as I have been, feels it his duty to expect and provide for.

"'Among the second, I would reckon the pleasures of social life, a handsome and independent property, and a high professional reputation. The time has been, and that not very long since, when I looked upon this last as the most important of all. But I am now wiser. I have not ceased to value this abstractedly as much as before; but its relative place among the objects of my desire is changed, — I trust irrevocably changed.

"'One word more on this subject and I have done. You say it is rather to express your confidence in my principles, than to insinuate any cautions, that you have written me so fully on this subject. Trust not too much in my principles. At this moment they are as firm and as virtuous as I could wish; but I have told you that I am weak, and have yet to learn the severe lesson of self-denial. For your own comfort and happiness believe me strong if you will; but for my good, believe me weak. It is my

sincere wish and desire, I may almost say command, (for in such matters the child may command the parent,) that you will often remind me in your letters of the temptations to which I am exposed, and the incentives to avoid them. Do not think that I am writing words which mean nothing. It had been my attention for some weeks past to write to you, before I left the country, on this very subject; to request your direct and constant aid in the preservation and improvement of my moral character. I hope that you will read and understand this request literally; as much so as any I ever made for a book to improve my mind, or a dollar to clothe my body. One duty yet remains, — a cheerful and a pleasant one and yet one which I can perform but too inadequately; — it is to express my gratitude to you; to express to you all that I feel would be impossible; — perhaps also it would be unnecessary, as you must know it already. It might have been expressed more fully, and most becomingly in the actions of my past life; but it has not been. No mode is now left me, but by words and my future conduct. No words that I can use, can ever exhibit to you my real feelings; and for my future conduct I fear, yet hope. The duties of a parent to his child, which your approving conscience must tell you in more audible tones than I can utter, have been by you most strictly exercised, call for a correspondent gratitude from the child, none the less because they are the *duties* of his parent. But in my case, there is something more than this. Though I love to dwell upon the relation, which exists between us, and the circumstances, and scenes, and events, which have arisen from that relation; yet I have sometimes taken another view of the subject. I have considered the relation of parent and child as adventitious or accidental; — I have looked upon you and myself as two beings whom God has placed upon this earth, and whom accident had brought together; I have then thought of how much I was indebted to you for all the principles, and knowledge, and powers that I possess; — but, my dear father, I will stop. You see what is in my mind, — I have been writing you, till I am getting too much excited; — but it is a holy excitement and will do me good. My prayer is to God, that we may meet again in this world, but I know it is uncertain; my prayer and efforts too are and shall be, that my life may be so spent as to meet you in another world, if not in this, which may God in his infinite mercy grant.' " — pp. 11 – 17.

These letters require no comment. They speak directly to the heart of every parent and child.

The subject of this Memoir was excited to greater ardor, if that were possible, in his professional studies by the new means of improvement afforded him at Paris, and the new views of

the science of medicine which opened upon him. He particularly attached himself to the instructions of M. Andral and M. Louis. By both he was treated with great attention and kindness; and between M. Louis and himself there "grew up a friendship of no common kind;" as is evidenced by the letters of M. Louis as well as his own, published in this volume.

That gentleman has gained a distinguished name by his new method of observing the phenomena and studying the causes of disease; and as Dr. Jackson jr. entered with zeal into his views, and promised to be among his most eminent disciples, we quote the following passages from an account of this new method given in a note to the Memoir.

"M. Louis has not brought forward a new system of medicine; he has only proposed and pursued a *new method* in prosecuting the study of medicine. This is nothing else than the method of induction, the method of Bacon, so much vaunted and yet so little regarded. But, if so, where is the novelty? If any one, after patiently studying and practising the method proposed by M. Louis, denies the novelty of it, I will not dispute with him a moment. Perhaps he will then agree with me, that it is a novelty to pursue the method of Bacon thoroughly and truly in the study of medicine; though it is not new to talk of it and to laud it.

"A little history of one part of M. Louis's life will throw some light on this subject. This gentleman went abroad, and I believe had some appointment in Russia, after he had gone through the usual course of professional education. Returning to France at the age of thirty-two, he was about to engage in private practice. He was then led to examine anew the state of the science of medicine, and was dissatisfied with it. He now decided to abandon the thoughts of practice for a time, and to devote himself to observation; that is, to the study of disease as it actually presents itself. With this view he went into the hospital la Charité in Paris, and followed the practice of M. Chomel, now a physician at the Hotel Dieu and Professor of Clinical Medicine, and highly esteemed as an author. M. Louis passed nearly seven years in studying medicine in this way. The first part of this time he was learning how to make observations. When he thought he had attained this art, he threw away, as I have understood, the notes he had already collected, and began anew to accumulate exact observations of the phenomena presented by the sick, and of those derived from an examination after death in the fatal cases. In this course of observations he did not make a selection of cases, but took them as they were presented, indiscriminately. He was not in a hurry to

make deductions from his cases, satisfied that he was gathering the materials, from which truth would ultimately be elicited. He was only careful that his observations should be correct, and had not any general principles or doctrines, for which he sought support or confirmation.

"To estimate the value of his observations, it is necessary to understand the plan on which he collected them. First, then, he ascertained when the patient under his examination began to be diseased. Not satisfied with vague answers, he went back to the period, when the patient enjoyed his usual health; and he also endeavoured to learn, whether that usual health had been firm, or in any respect infirm. He noted also the age, occupation, residence, and manner of living of the patient; likewise any accidents which occurred, and which might have influenced the disease then affecting him. He ascertained also, as much as possible, the diseases which had occurred in the family of his patient. Secondly, he inquired into the present disease, ascertaining not only what symptoms had marked its commencement, but those which had been subsequently developed, and the order of their occurrence; and recording those which might not seem to be connected with the principal disease, as well as those which were so connected; also, measuring the degree or violence of each symptom, with as much accuracy as the case would admit. Thirdly, he noted the actual phenomena present at his examination, depending for this not only on the statement of the patient, but on his own senses, his eyes, his ears, and his hands. Under this and the preceding head, he was not satisfied with noting the functions in which the patient complained of disorder, but examined carefully as to all the functions, recording their state as being healthy or otherwise, and even noticing the absence of symptoms, which might bear on the diagnosis. Thus all secondary diseases, and those which accidentally coexisted with the principal malady, were brought under his view. Fourthly, he continued to watch his patient from day to day, carefully recording all the changes which occurred in him, till his restoration to health or his decease. Fifthly, in the fatal cases he exercised the same scrupulous care in examining the dead, as he had in regard to the living subject. Prepared by a minute acquaintance with anatomy, and familiar with the changes wrought by disease, he looked not only at the parts where the principal disorder was manifested, but at all the organs. His notes did not state opinions, but facts. He recorded, in regard to each part which was not quite healthy in its appearance, the changes in color, consistence, firmness, thickness, &c.; not contenting himself with saying, that a part was inflamed, or was cancerous, or with the use of any general but indefinite terms."

* * * * *

"It was only when he had accumulated a great mass of cases, that M. Louis began to deduce from them any general principles. He then arranged the facts he had collected in a tabular form, so as to faciltate a comparison of them. How much labor this required will be in some measure conceived, when I state that, while going through one class of his observations, those, I believe, which relate to acute diseases, he retired to a distance from Paris, and occupied ten months in making out his tables. This statement is, I believe, substantially if not precisely correct.

"Let the reader conceive of these tables, drawn out with accuracy, having columns devoted, with proper discrimination, to each function and to its various derangements, as manifested during life, and to each organ and its lesions, as ascertained after death; let him then go to these tables and inquire, under what circumstances certain signs of disease arise, and with what pathological changes in the dead body they are found to correspond; let him ask, under what circumstances certain morbid changes of structure occur, and with what symptoms they are found to be connected; he may find the answers, and he may obtain them numerically." — pp. 59 – 63.

These general statements are further illustrated in the note; and examples are given of the facts that have been established by this more accurate and philosophical mode of observation. It seemed proper to give some account of it, as Dr. Jackson, jr., without doubt, did much, in the circle in this country with which he was immediately connected, to direct the attention of other physicians to the subject. M. Louis wrote to his father, urging that he should be allowed to devote some years after his return to Boston merely to "medical observation." His letter is given, together with the answer of Dr. Jackson, sen'r., assigning his reasons for not assenting to the proposal.

While the subject of this Memoir was residing at Paris, the irruption of the cholera into that city afforded a new opportunity for the exhibition for his moral and intellectual character. The heroism, sometimes demanded of the medical profession, that leads one calmly to expose himself to death, under the action of no false stimulants, to save, not destroy, the lives of others, is of a far higher character than that ordinarily displayed on the field of battle.

"The period of the epidemic cholera in Paris was one of the greatest interest and of the greatest anxiety to the subject of this

memoir. Until the end of the winter 1831–2, the accounts which we had received in this country of the cholera in Europe, were of the most alarming character. We knew that, arising many years previously in the hot climates of Asia, this deadly malady had passed in a north-west direction into the coldest regions of Europe, aud was thence extending itself over that quarter of the globe. Why it thus spread, and whether it was propagated by contagion, many persons were ready to decide upon general principles; but precise facts, on which to form a decision, were not yet furnished. One thing was certain, that it affected great numbers wherever it went, and proved fatal to a large proportion of those affected. Regarding my son as comparatively without friends in a foreign country, not then knowing the kind feelings already entertained for him by those most capable of taking care of him, I wrote to him urgently, to fly before this plague, and even to leave Europe, should the disease invade at once France and Great Britain. Such letters, and such only, had he received on this subject, when the disease appeared in Paris, in the last days of March. It had already been introduced into England, but had there been comparatively limited in its extension. In Paris, it extended at once to very large numbers, and assumed within one week the most terrific aspect; such as to excite within that short period the most outrageous mobs, under a belief that the poorer classes had been designedly poisoned. On the sudden outbreak of this most alarming disease, my son's mind was exercised in the most distressing manner. The following extract from his letter of April 8th, which will be given in full among his letters, will describe his feelings, and give the result to which he was brought in this dilemma.

"'I almost weep to write you again from Paris. It is now the first moment of my life, that I have been placed between two duties, each strong, each binding, and where my difficulty is to decide which is the most so. But I have decided, — as I know, against your wishes. God grant that circumstances may be such that you shall accord with me, when the time is passed. A medical man has his duties; — I am a boy in medicine; — granted. But I am like the other Americans here about me. An opportunity is offered us of studying a disease, which will probably visit our hitherto untouched country. Were the disease about you, would you fly? You could not, for the public would look to you. You would not, for your sense of duty would prevent you. I am, in a measure, in the same condition.'

"The moment was a fearful one, most assuredly. The mortality in Paris rose to eight hundred a day, within three weeks from the first appearance of the disease. It was in the Hôtel Dieu my son first saw the victims of it in any number, and the emphatic words in which he described it were nearly the same, as were often used

by others. 'The disease is death;' he said, 'truly, at Hôtel Dieu, where I have seen fifty and more in a ward, it is almost like walking through an autopsy room; in many, nothing but the act of respiration shows that life still exists. It is truly awful.'" — pp. 24 – 26.

While he remained in Paris during the prevalence of this frightful disease, he gave up his whole time to its study. Retiring to England about the last of April, he there digested his observations upon sixty of the cases which he had examined, of which thirty were favorable and thirty fatal in their termination. The manuscript was forwarded to his father and published in this country. "I am willing to refer to the book," says his father, "in support of the praise which I have ventured to give to my own son." We refrain from quoting the further apparently very impartial remarks which are made concerning it.

He remained for some time in England, and then having returned to Paris, quitted it finally in July, 1833. On the 23d of August he again landed on his native shores; — to give momentary pleasure to a large circle of friends; to afford them evidence that his character was what it had appeared to be; and to die. He was attacked by our autumnal fever in a very severe form just two months after his arrival. At the end of three months he seemed to have regained his health. But in February he had some recurrence of a diarrhœa which had afflicted him in France. The disease, which was at first regarded as of little importance, assumed the character of a severe dysentery; and the event should be told only in the words of his father.

"Under this disease he suffered much and struggled hard, retaining his firmness of mind, and fully aware of the uncertainty of its issue. He was severely sick about three weeks, but after the first fortnight, I regarded him as safe. The dysenteric affection was clearly subsiding, and he recovered some appetite, though still very weak. Suddenly a change occurred, of which the cause was latent; the prostration was extreme; his mind gave way, and in less than two days and a half he ceased to breathe. In his last hours, his mind, amidst many wandering thoughts, appeared to get momentary glimpses of his real situation. He did not seem to shrink from the view, but was unable to keep it before him from failure in his physical strength. In one of these moments he said very distinctly and solemnly, 'God, pardon me.' That he had sins which

once the solid materials for its erection, and flowers for its ornament." — pp. 53, 54.

We should be doing injustice to our readers if we were to attempt to deepen the impression, which the extracts we have given are of a character to produce. But we may state one train of sentiment which the reading of this Memoir has awakened in our minds. It is strikingly adapted to strengthen the feeling, which is a different thing from the conviction, of the reality of death; and to divest it at the same time of all those false terrors that commonly accompany it. In the natural course of things, as we advance in life, unless the discipline of God has been lost upon us, our connexions with this world are weakening, and those with the future growing more numerous and intimate. Objects of our dearest love, who were an essential part of all our hopes and cares, have been removed to a better state of being, while we are left behind. We have seen the vigor of early manhood and the beauty of female loveliness disappear from among us, and felt deeply what a void was produced by their passing away. The aspect of life has changed; we have ourselves died in part; and we cannot avoid recollecting, that soon, God only knows how soon, we too shall go,

> "Even where weak infancy, and timorous age,
> And maiden fearfulness, have gone before us."

Could our individual lives be prolonged in the enjoyment of health and strength, with what indifference, in the second century of this mode of being, should we regard all its ordinary concerns and pleasures? What heart-worn, desolate beings should we become? All around us has the stamp of change and mortality upon it. It is this, if we may be allowed again to borrow the language of poetry, which

> "gives to the flute-notes an undertone,
> To the rose a coloring not its own."

But we have no just conceptions of death, when we regard it as the termination of all present things, and see nothing beyond but some indistinct and half-terrific vision of great enjoyment or great suffering, the one or the other not being conceived of, as the natural result of the laws of God's moral government, such as we see them operating in this world, but viewed as the effect of some immediate act of his will. It is only when we carry forward, in imagination, into the future

life, the affections, the permanent interests, the pursuits worthy of an immortal being, the high hopes and desires of the present, that we have just notions either of that state or of the transition to it. A question has been raised, whether we shall there recognise our friends. What should we be if we did not; — social as we are in all our virtues; having scarcely a feeling, even a blamable feeling, which regards *only* ourselves; members of each other; with all our recollections and interests, our very individuality, as it were, blended with the being of others? What consciousness should we have ourselves, deprived of the memory of those we have loved? Or what could we enjoy, if, retaining their memory, we were separated from them for ever?

The change produced by the transition to the future life, we may reasonably believe, will be far less than the change which in middle life we have gone through since the period of our earlier remembrances. It must, it is true, be more sudden, like the voyage which carries us from our native country to some distant climate, whose wonders and beauties we had only read of and imagined. But when we too arrive in that future world, we shall probably look back, in company with the friends who will rejoin us, upon the cares, the interests, and the mistakes of the present, somewhat as we now look back upon those of our childhood; and almost wonder to find that we, with all our consciousness and all our gratified affections, are at last in the midst of scenes so strange and so delightful.

A. N.

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ART. V. — *An Address delivered before the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street, May* 27, 1835.

THE subject assigned to the present Address is, "The best means of bringing our Lay brethren to be more useful in the maintenance of Religious Institutions." The subject, thus stated, implies, that greater action on the part of the laity, than now exists, is desirable. This may possibly be questioned by some, as there are those who appear to think religious institutions the exclusive charge of the clergy, and any interference on the part of other men, to be deprecated. It may not be amiss, therefore, to begin with one word in defence of the

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Prof. A. Norton. Rec. pap. v. 10 37.

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ON THE

# POETRY OF MRS. HEMANS.

By Andrews Norton

[From the Christian Examiner for January, 1836.]

We have now received the last of the imperishable gifts of Mrs. Hemans's genius. The period of her spirit's trials and sufferings and its glorious course on earth has been completed. She has left an unclouded fame; and we may say in her own words:

"No tears for thee! — though light be from us gone
With thy soul's radiance; * * * * *
No tears for thee!
They that have loved an exile, must not mourn
To see him parting for his native bourn
O'er the dark sea."

As this, therefore, will be the last time that we shall review any production of Mrs. Hemans, we may be permitted to recall, with a melancholy pleasure, the admiration and delight with which we have followed the progress of her genius. The feelings with which her works are now generally regarded, have been expressed in no publication earlier, more frequently, or more warmly, than in our own. Without repeating what we have already said, we shall now endeavour to point out some of their features considered in relation to that moral culture in which alone such writings can exist.

Mrs. Hemans may be considered as the representative of a new school of poetry, or, to speak more precisely, her poetry discovers characteristics of the highest kind, which belong almost exclusively to that of later times, and have been the result of the gradual advancement, and especially the moral progress, of mankind. It is only, when man, under the influence of true religion, feels himself connected with whatever is infinite, that his affections and powers are fully developed. The poetry of an immortal being must be of a different

"I thus remind thee now, that thou mayst cease
Henceforth from artifice, and mayst be taught
How little all the dalliance and the love
Which, stealing down from heaven, thou hast by fraud
Obtained from me, shall favor thy designs."

It may be incidentally remarked, that these lines illustrate, not merely the features of the ancient mythology, but also the condition of woman as treated by the heroes of Homer and by his contemporaries. We happen just to have opened upon another striking example of the *elegance* of the ancient mythology during the Augustan age. It is a passage of Ovid, almost too indecent and silly to be alluded to, though Addison was not ashamed to translate it, beginning ;

"Fortè Jovem memorant, diffusum nectare, curas
Seposuisse graves, vacuâque agitasse remissos
Cum Junone jocos." *

From the passage referred to, we may judge something of the convivial manners of the Romans, and of the habits of intercourse between the sexes.

It is remarkable, that in all religious and moral conceptions, the noblest materials of poetry, the philosophers were very far in advance of the poets. "The fables of Hesiod and Homer," says Plato, "are especially to be censured. They have uttered the greatest falsehoods concerning the greatest beings." Referring to the loathsome and abominable fables about Cœlus, Saturn, and Jupiter, he says ; "We must not tell our youth, that he who commits the greatest iniquity does nothing strange, nor he who inflicts the most cruel punishment upon his father when injured by him ; but that he is only doing what was done by the first and greatest of the gods." A little after he subjoins ; "The chaining of Juno by her son, the throwing of Vulcan from heaven by his father, because he attempted to defend his mother from being beaten, and the battles of the Gods described by Homer, are not fictions to be allowed in our city, whether explained allegorically or not." "Though we praise many things in Homer," he says, "we shall not praise him when he represents Jupiter as sending a lying dream to Agamemnon, nor Æschylus when he makes Thetis complain of

* It is related that Jove chanced, being exhilarated by nectar, to lay aside his weighty cares, and interchange pleasant jokes with idle Juno.

Conspicit, ecce, alios dextrâ lævâque per herbam
Vescentes, lætumque choro pæana canentes.*

Thus the ancient poets were shut out from the whole sphere of religious sentiment; and all those numberless conceptions and feelings, that spring from our knowledge of God and the sense of our own immortality, are absent from their writings, while this whole exhaustless domain has been laid open to the poets of later times. A single example may illustrate what has been said. Let us take the concluding verses of Mrs. Hemans's "Fountain of Oblivion."

"Fill with forgetfulness! — there are, there *are*
Voices whose music I have loved too well;
Eyes of deep gentleness, — but they are far, —
Never! oh — never, in my home to dwell!
Take their soft looks from off my yearning soul, —
Fill high th' oblivious bowl!

"Yet pause again! — with memory wilt thou cast
The undying hope away, of memory born?
Hope of reunion, heart to heart at last,
No restless doubt between, no rankling thorn?
Wouldst thou erase all records of delight
That make such visions bright?

"Fill with forgetfulness, fill high! — yet stay, —
— 'T is from the past we shadow forth the land
Where smiles, long lost, again shall light our way,
And the soul's friends be wreathed in one bright band:
— Pour the sweet waters back on their own rill,
I *must* remember still.

"For their sake, for the dead, — whose image nought
May dim within the temple of my breast, —
For their love's sake, which now no earthly thought
May shake or trouble with its own unrest,
Though the past haunt me as a spirit, — yet
I ask not to forget."

The whole train of emotion and thought in these verses is of a character wholly unknown to the classic days of Greece and Rome. To imagine any thing corresponding to it in the work

* The love of horses which they had alive,
And care of chariots, after death survive.
In bands, reclining on the grassy plain,
They feasted and poured forth a joyful strain.
*See Dryden's Virgil.*

of an ancient poet, is to bring together conceptions the most incongruous.

Here it may be worth while, in order to prevent ourselves from being misunderstood, to observe, that we do not mean to depreciate the value of the study of the ancient poets. After those inquiries by which the truths of religion are established, there are none of more interest or importance than such as relate to the mind and heart of man, and open to us a knowledge of what he has been and what he may be on earth. But, to attain this knowledge, we must acquaint ourselves with the moral and intellectual character of our race, as it has existed and exists under influences and forms of society very unlike each other. In this research, no period can be compared in interest with a few centuries in the history of Athens and Rome, which have left traces still so deeply impressed upon the civilized world. Thus, in studying the history of human nature, the Grecian and Roman poets furnish some of our most important materials. We may discover in them a source of sentiments and opinions that still affect men's minds. Homer carries us back to remote Pagan antiquity, on which his writings shed a light afforded by no other; and at the same time, having been regarded as the undisputed master-poet by his countrymen, (for this Plato himself does not question,) he shows us what were the topics by which their imaginations were most affected during the period of their greatest civilization. The dramatic poets of Athens reflect the Athenian character; and in Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, we find the lineaments of the Augustan age. But the value which thus attaches to their works is not to be confounded with the absolute value of those works as poems, adapted through their intrinsic beauties to give delight at the present day. In estimating their naked worth, we must likewise separate from them the interest connected with their antiquity, and all those accidental associations that have been gathering round them for many centuries. We must even put out of view the native genius of the writer, if this genius have been exerted under circumstances so unfavorable as to render it ineffectual to produce what may give pleasure to a pure and highly cultivated mind. Notwithstanding the traditionary enthusiasm that has existed on the subject, it may well be doubted, whether their power of giving vivid pleasure merely as poetical compositions, forms a principal recommendation of the study of the ancient poets. They were not ac-

quainted with the richest realms of mind. It is a mistake to address them as "bards illustrious, *born in happier days.*" But to return to our immediate subject.

After the revival of letters, the forms of what was called Christianity, both among Catholics and Protestants, were in many respects so abhorrent to reason, or feeling, or both, that they could combine in no intimate union with our higher nature, however they might operate on men's passions or fears. Religious truth was, however, sometimes contemplated in greater purity by minds of the better class; and we early begin to find in poetry some expressions of true religious sentiment. But what advance had been actually made even in the seventeenth century, we may learn from the great work of Milton. It is based on a system of mythology, more sublime than the Pagan, and less adapted to degrade the moral feelings, but scarcely less offensive to reason, and spreading all but a Manichæan gloom and blight over the creation of God. Putting forth his vast genius, he struggles with it, as he can, moulding it into colossal forms that repel our human sympathies, and lavishing upon it gorgeous treasures of imagination; but even his powers yield and sink at times before its intrinsic incongruity and essential falsehood. Whoever rightly apprehends the character of God, or contemplates as he ought the invisible world, will turn to but few pages of the Paradise Lost, with the hope of finding expressions correspondent to his thoughts and emotions. We feel with pain the inappreciable contrast between the genius displayed in the poetical execution of the work, and the absurdity of its prose story. It is the opposition which this story presents to the most ennobling truths, even more than "the want of human interest," on which Johnson remarks, that gives to the poem the unattractive character of which he speaks, and which we believe is felt by almost all its readers.

Doubtless pure religious sentiment breaks out in this and in the other poems of Milton. The concluding line of his Sonnet on his blindness,

"They also serve who only stand and wait,"

and numerous other passages of similar beauty, have, we may believe, found an answering feeling in many hearts. But in speaking of those causes which have given a new character to the poetry of later times, it is not our purpose to trace their influence historically. Going back to the days of Grecian and

Roman civilization, we shall take only a few illustrations, that may serve to show more clearly the contrast produced by their absence on one hand, or their operation on the other.

In proportion as we contemplate the world from the height to which true religion conducts us, we perceive the circle of moral action widening indefinitely. Our duties toward the inferior animals are few and low, compared with those which we lie under to our fellow-men; and our duties toward our fellow-men become far more extensive and assume a far more solemn character, when we regard them, not as born to perish upon earth, but as commencing here an unending existence. Our obligations to others correspond to our means of serving them; and we are introduced to a higher class of virtues, as soon as we recognise in those around us beings forming characters for a different mode of existence, to whom the highest service that can be rendered is to assist their progress in virtue, and to whom some influence, good or evil, is continually flowing out from us, and diverging into channels of which we cannot see the termination. All interest in the spiritual and imperishable good of our fellow-men must depend upon our regarding them as spiritual and imperishable. It is only under a sense of our true nature, that man is capable of reaching the sublime thought of assimilating himself to God by devoting his powers to the moral welfare of his fellow-men.

" *Yet*, yet sustain me, Holiest! — I am vowed
To solemn service high;
And shall the spirit, for thy tasks endowed,
Sink on the threshold of the sanctuary,
Fainting beneath the burden of the day,
Because no human tone
Unto the altar-stone
Of that pure spousal fane inviolate,
Where it should make eternal truth its mate,
May cheer the sacred, solitary way?

" Oh! be the whisper of thy voice within
Enough to strengthen! Be the hope to win
A more deep-seeing homage for thy name,
Far, far beyond the burning dream of fame!
Make me thine only! Let me add but one
To those refulgent steps all undefiled,
Which glorious minds have piled
Through bright self-offering, earnest, child-like, lone,
For mounting to thy throne!

And let my soul, upborne
On wings of inner morn,
Find, in illumined secrecy, the sense
Of that blest work, its own high recompense."

But there is more to be considered. The conduct which would be wise and right for man if immortal, would not be wise and right for him if viewed as a perishing animal. It is true that moral good is always good, and moral evil always evil; but with an essential change in our nature and relations, there must likewise be an essential change in what is morally good or evil. If all human hopes were limited to this world, it would be folly for any one to act as if he and others were to exist for ever. The whole plan of life and of its duties, formed by a wise man would be quite different in one case from what it would be in the other; and the course of life actually pursued by the generality, if destitute of all religious belief, would be still more unlike that of men under its influence.

"Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi
Spem longam reseces." *

"Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?" †

"Lætus in presens, animus quod ultra est
Oderit curare, et amara lento
Temperet risu." ‡

In the absence of religious faith, this is true philosophy. If this life were the limit of our being, its pleasures and pains would be the only objects of our concern. Nothing would be virtuous which tended not to the attainment and communication of those limited and perishing pleasures we might here partake; nothing morally evil, but what lessened our own capacity for enjoying them, or tended to prevent others from sharing them with us. There would be no sphere for the exercise of those powers, no object for those capacities of happiness, that belong to the imperishable part of our nature. There would be nothing to prompt one to great sacrifices or acts of moral

* Be wise, pour out your wine, and contract your hopes within life's narrow compass.

† Why in so short a life, do we, in our bravery, aim at so much?

‡ Joyous during the present hour, the mind should reject all care for what is beyond, and temper what is bitter with a gentle smile.

heroism; for these have their source in the consciousness of immortality, in a sense of our connexion with the infinite, and look forward to good for ourselves and others beyond the limits of life. Earthly motives afford no soil in which the nobler virtues can strike their roots. It is true that the ancients, particularly the ancient philosophers, were not without the influence of truly religious conceptions, and under almost any forms of opinion the better nature of man will of itself occasionally break out into exhibitions of excellence. But the religious sentiment being so weak and perverted among the ancient poets, we find little in their works that can be regarded as morally noble, and scarcely an indistinct recognition of those deep feelings and unearthly virtues which have their source in our spiritual nature. The same remark is almost equally applicable to a large proportion of the modern poets; for true religion has been little understood or felt by them. Where, in any age preceding our own, may we hope to find such expressions of sentiment as in the following verses from Mrs. Hemans's "Vaudois Wife." *

"But calm thee! Let the thought of death
A solemn peace restore;
The voice that must be silent soon,
Would speak to thee once more,
That thou mayst bear its blessing on
Through years of after life, —
A token of consoling love,
Even from this hour of strife.

"I bless thee for the noble heart,
The tender, and the true,
Where mine hath found the happiest rest
That e'er fond woman's knew;
I bless thee, faithful friend and guide,
For my own, my treasured share,
In the mournful secrets of thy soul,
In thy sorrow, in thy prayer.

* * * * *

"I bless thee for the last rich boon
Won from affection tried,
The right to gaze on death with thee,
To perish by thy side!

"* The wife of a Vaudois leader, in one of the attacks made on the Protestant hamlets, received a mortal wound, and died in her husband's arms, exhorting him to courage and endurance."

And yet more for the glorious hope
Even to *these* moments given; —
Did not *thy* spirit ever lift
The trust of *mine* to Heaven?

"Now be *thou* strong! Oh! knew we not
Our path must lead to this?
A shadow and a trembling still
Were mingled with our bliss!
We plighted our young hearts when storms
Were dark upon the sky,
In full, deep knowledge of their task
To suffer and to die!

"Be strong! I leave the living voice
Of this, my martyred blood,
With the thousand echoes of the hills,
With the torrent's foaming flood, —
A spirit 'midst the caves to dwell,
A token on the air,
To rouse the valiant from repose,
The fainting from despair.

"Hear it, and bear thou on, my love!
Ay, joyously endure!
Our mountains must be altars yet,
Inviolate and pure;
There must our God be worshipped still
With the worship of the free; —
Farewell! there's but *one* pang in death,
One only, — leaving thee!"

With this, may be compared the speech of Alcestis in Euripides, when dying in the presence of her husband, under circumstances adapted to call forth all that power of expressing the tender emotions, for which Euripides has been thought to be distinguished. We give it below in Potter's translation.*

* "Thou seest, Admetus, what to me the Fates
Assign; yet, e'er I die, I wish to tell thee
What lies most near my heart. I honored thee,
And in exchange for thine my forfeit life
Devoted; now I die for thee, though free
Not to have died, but from Thessalia's chiefs
Preferring whom I pleased in royal state
To have lived happy here: I had no will
To live bereft of thee with these poor orphans:





Under the influence of religion, we are acted upon by new motives, through the sense created within us, of the worth of our fellow-men. Religion invests them with a new character,

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I die without reluctance, though the gifts
Of youth are mine to make life grateful to me.
Yet he that gave thee birth, and she that bore thee,
Deserted thee, though well it had beseemed them
With honor to have died for thee, t' have saved
Their son with honor, glorious in their death.
They had no child but thee, they had no hope
Of other offspring, shouldst thou die; and I
Might thus have lived, thou might'st have lived till age
Crept slowly on, nor wouldst thou heave the sigh
Thus of thy wife deprived, nor train alone
Thy orphan children: but some god appointed
It should be thus: thus be it: thou to me
Requite this kindness; never shall I ask
An equal retribution, nothing bears
A value high as life: yet my request
Is just, thou wilt confess it; for thy love
To these our children equals mine, thy soul
If wisdom tempers: in their mother's house
Let them be lords: wed not again, to set
A stepdame o'er my children, some base woman
That wants my virtues; she through jealousy
Will work against their lives, because to thee
I bore them: do not this, I beg thee do not;
For to the offspring of a former bed
A stepdame comes sharp as a serpent's tooth.
My son, that holds endearing converse with thee,
Hath in his father a secure protection.
But who, my daughter, shall with honor guide
Thy virgin years? What woman shalt thou find
New-wedded to thy father, whose vile arts
Will not with slanderous falsehoods taint thy name,
And blast thy nuptials in youth's freshest bloom?
For never shall thy mother see thee led
A bride, nor at thy throes speak comfort to thee,
Then present when a mother's tenderness
Is most alive: for I must die; the ill
Waits not a day, but quickly shall I be
Numbered amongst the dead. Farewell, be happy.
And thou, my husband, mayst with honor boast
Thou hast been wedded to a virtuous wife;
And you, my children, glory in your mother."

strips off the disguise with which the accidents of mortality, its imperfections, weaknesses, follies, miseries, and crimes hide their essential nature from our view, and presents them before us with all the interests and capacities of immortal beings. They who are dear to us, are worthy of all love and self-devotion, worthy of affections unlimited by death or time. They are members with us of the imperishable family of God, in whose company we are to exist for ever, and with whom our union will become more entire, as we grow purer and more disinterested.

Thus in later days there has been a growth of sentiments and affections, almost unknown before. Our better feelings toward our fellow-men have acquired far more strength, and assumed new forms. In other times, man has been comparatively an insulated being. Domestic life, that life in which now almost all our joys or sorrows are centred, was scarcely known to the ancients; and has had but a sickly and artificial existence even in modern ages, through the operation of false notions of domestic government and discipline, and of the mutual relations of husband and wife, parents and children. Religion, by teaching us justly to estimate what is truly excellent in our nature, what is intellectual, moral, and ever-enduring, has given to woman the rank to which she is entitled. It has made her the friend of man; and our feelings are in harmony with the poet when he speaks of

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned
> To warn, to comfort and command;
> And yet a spirit still, and bright
> With something of an angel light."

But man has never regarded woman with respect and true love, except so far as he has regarded her as a spiritual and immortal being. Without this, no conception can exist of that inseparable union which blends all the interests and affections of one being with those of another. The poetry of the ancients that expresses any sentiments toward the female sex is, with rare exceptions, of the grossest kind, sensual, coarse, indecent, brutal. We can pick out only a few passages from the mass, which shadow forth any thing like real affection.*

* About the middle of the last century, the following lines, by Dr. Jortin, were published anonymously, as part of an ancient inscription

gether bad."* Where women are thus estimated, the domestic charities, our best school of virtue, cannot exist; those affections which are at once the gentlest and the strongest have no place; nor will there be any true refinement, nor quick and generous feeling in the intercourse between man and man. The first and strongest link in the chain of human sympathy is wanting.

When Jesus Christ pronounced these words, "*What God has joined together, let not man put asunder,*" he laid down the fundamental law of human civilization. But it would have been impossible to render marriage the most solemn and indissoluble of connexions, if his religion had not at the same time restored to woman the character designed for her by nature, and raised her to that place she now holds, wherever the truths he taught have had somewhat of their proper influence.

When the feelings that give sanctity to marriage are wanting, the parental affections operate but feebly. The new-born child, instead of being regarded as a gift and a trust from God, a new creature with whom we have become for ever connected, and a living bond of common interest to strengthen the union of its parents, is either looked at, on the one hand, as a present incumbrance, or on the other, as a probable future support. The whole history of the domestic relations of the ancients establishes this truth. What must have been the state of parental affection among those who practised and tolerated the destruction of infants as a common custom? The absence of such affection is not to be estimated by the number of victims to that custom, but by the fact of its being generally viewed without horror or reprobation. It was a shocking trait of barbarity in the character of the elder Cato, that he recommended that worn-out and disabled slaves should be exposed to perish; but an exposure more inhuman, which showed that man had lost even the feelings of the lower animals, was constantly

* "What Aristotle says," observes his able translator, Mr. Twining, "is, I fear, but too conformable to the manner in which the ancients usually speak of the sex *in general*. At least he is certainly consistent with himself: witness the following very curious character of women in his "*History of Animals*," which I give the reader by no means for his assent, but for his wonder or his diversion." Mr. Twining's remarks sufficiently imply of what nature this character is, and we forbear to quote it.

going on, and was enjoined, under certain circumstances, both by Plato and Aristotle, as a law of their imagined republics. There is a famous saying in one of the comedies of Terence, which has been often quoted as a fine expression of philanthropy ; *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto.** It is put into the mouth of a man whose wife is afterwards represented as in fear before him, because she had not destroyed her female infant as he had commanded, but given it a chance for preservation by causing it to be exposed alive. Maternal love cannot be wholly extinguished ; but it is the glow of modern feeling only which pours its beauty over the following lines, to which nothing parallel can be found in the poets of Greece or Rome, though Mrs. Hemans apostrophizes the Elysium of their imagining.

" Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of nature to decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before the mother lay,
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile ! Elysium what wert *thou*
To her, who wept o'er that young slumberer's brow ?

Thou hadst no home, green land !
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's fresh flowers just opening in its hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown,
Which, in its clear eye, shone
Like spring's first wakening ! but that light was past ; —
Where went the dew-drop swept before the blast ? "

The ancient popular faith was indeed destitute of consolation ; but in the absence of those associations which shed a holy light round an infant, such consolation is less needed. Even the fountain of maternal affection flows with but a scanty and interrupted stream.

Thus religion, by making man of more worth to man, and by strengthening our assurance in each other's sympathy and virtue, has called forth affections which lay folded up in our nature, or had put forth only a stinted growth. The finer productions of modern poetry are colored throughout with expressions of their beauty and strength. Moral qualities, good or bad, as they exist in men, unformed directly or indirectly by

* I am a man ; whatever concerns other men, I think my concern.

religion, owe their strength principally to impulse and passion, or depend, like the inconsistent hospitality of the Arab, or the pride of the Roman, on what he thought the glory of his country, upon prejudices, which spring partly from generous feeling and partly from selfish regards, and are made strong and binding upon the individual by universal consent. It is only when quickened by religious sentiment, that the human character displays all its complicated variety of feelings. Then affections, which had before seemed almost powerless, become essential elements of our being. Associations, till then unknown, link together their invisible chains; and the feeling with which they thrill us when touched, presents a new phenomenon in our nature. The love of our youthful home may seem to us a universal sentiment, likely to appear in the poetry of all times; yet how little reference to it do we find in any poetry before our own age, and especially how little reference, like the following, to its moral power.

" 'Hast thou come with the heart of thy childhood back?
The free, the pure, the kind?'
—So murmured the trees in my homeward track,
As they played to the mountain-wind.

" 'Hath thy soul been true to its early love?'
Whispered my native streams;
'Hath the spirit, nursed amidst hill and grove,
Still revered its first high dreams?'

" 'Hast thou borne in thy bosom the holy prayer
Of the child in his parent-halls?'
—Thus breathed a voice on the thrilling air,
From the old ancestral walls.

" 'Hast thou kept thy faith with the faithful dead,
Whose place of rest is nigh?
With the father's blessing o'er thee shed,
With the mother's trusting eye?'

" —Then my tears gushed forth in sudden rain,
As I answered—'O, ye shades!
I bring not my childhood's heart again
To the freedom of your glades.

" 'I have turned from my first pure love aside
O bright and happy streams!
Light after light, in my soul have died
The day-spring's glorious dreams.

" 'And the holy prayer from my thoughts hath passed —
The prayer at my mother's knee ;
Darkened and troubled I come at last,
Home of my boyish glee !

" 'But I bear from my childhood a gift of tears,
To soften and atone ;
And oh ! ye scenes of those blessed years,
They shall make me again your own.' "

It is under the continued influence of Christianity, however imperfect that influence may have been, that the human character, which had before manifested itself partially and irregularly in the rudeness and inconsistency of its elementary passions, has begun to struggle toward its full developement. It has become alive to feelings, and is putting forth powers, which belong to its immortal nature. We may perceive this unfolding of man in the very structure of language, which, enlarged as it has been with new terms, yet presents so imperfect a means for expressing the different qualities and shades of character, and the modes and combinations of feeling. The study of human nature has thus become a science of far more interest and complexity. Many forms of character now appear, that belong to no period in the progress of the human race, preceding that to which we have arrived. To the eye of the poet, man presents himself in new aspects of strength and weakness, in multiform relations to the finite and the infinite, and with all the variety of sentiments resulting from the change in his prospects and hopes. He is now "a traveller between life and death" ; his highest interests connect him with the boundless, the unearthly, and the mysterious ; with all that has most power to affect the imagination, and excite the strongest and deepest feelings. It is only through his relations to God and eternity, that man becomes an exhaustless subject of high poetry. When thus viewed, his ruined home may be repeopled with thoughts and images such as these :

" Thou hast heard many sounds, thou hearth,
Deserted now by all !
Voices at eve here met in mirth,
Which eve may ne'er recall.
Youth's buoyant step, and woman's tone,
And childhood's laughing glee,
And song and prayer have all been known,
Hearth of the dead ! to thee.

" Thou hast heard blessings fondly poured
Upon the infant head,
As if in every fervent word
The living soul were shed :
Thou hast seen partings, — such as bear
The bloom from life away, —
Alas ! for love in changeful air,
Where nought beloved can stay !

" Here, by the restless bed of pain,
The vigil hath been kept,
Till sunrise, bright with hope in vain,
Burst forth on eyes that wept :
Here hath been felt the hush, the gloom,
The breathless influence shed
Through the dim dwelling, from the room
Wherein reposed the dead.

" The seat left void, the missing face,
Have here been marked and mourned ;
And time hath filled the vacant place,
And gladness hath returned :
Till from the narrowing household chain
The links dropped, one by one ;
And homewards hither, o'er the main,
Came the spring-birds alone.

" Is there not cause, then — cause for thought,
Fixed eye, and lingering tread,
Where, with their thousand mysteries fraught,
E'en lowliest hearts have bled ?
Where, in its ever-haunting thirst
For draughts of purer day,
Man's soul with fitful strength hath burst
The clouds that wrapt its way ? "

The recognition of the higher relations of man has given a characteristic to modern poetry, particularly English poetry, through which it has peculiar power over the heart. Expressions and descriptions of human suffering, instead of depressing us with melancholy, become sublime or touching, when that suffering is brought into direct or indirect contrast with man's nature and hopes as an immortal being, or is represented as calling into exercise those virtues which can exist in such a being alone. There is no pathos in the mere lamentations of an individual over his own particular lot, or over the condition of a race to which he feels it an unhappiness to belong.

There is nothing that excites any tender or elevating feeling in such verses as the following from an ancient poet.

" Is there a man just, honest, nobly born ?
Malice shall hunt him down. Does wealth attend him ?
Trouble is hard behind. Conscience direct ?
Beggary is at his heels. * * * * *
* * * * * Account that day
Which brings no new mischance, a day of rest.
For what is man ? What matter is he made of ?
How born ? What is he and what shall he be ?
What an unnatural parent is this world,
To foster none but villains, and destroy
All who are benefactors to mankind ! " *

The sufferings to which we are here exposed cease to be a subject that leads to any grateful or ennobling state of mind, when man regards the pleasures of this life as his only good. Among the ancient poets, the contemplation of its evils, when viewed at a distance, is associated with sentiments simply disheartening, or altogether superficial and trifling. Let us take for example a famous ode of Horace. It begins :

" Eheu ! fugaces, Postume, Postume,
Labuntur anni ; nec pietas moram
Rugis et instanti senectæ
Afferet, indomitæque morti. " †

It ends :

" Absumet hæres Cæcuba dignior,
Servata centum clavibus ; et mero
Tinget pavimentum superbo
Pontificum potiore cœnis." ‡

* The original is ascribed to Sotades. See Cumberland's " Observer," No. 147. Cumberland says ; " There is a melancholy grandeur in these sentiments with a simplicity of expression, which prove to us that these authors (the Greek comic writers) occasionally diverged from the gay spirit of comedy into passages not only of the most serious, but sublimest cast." Cumberland is one of those critics who have regarded themselves as privileged in writing any sort of laudatory nonsense about the ancient poets.

† Alas ! my friend, the rapid years
Are gliding on ; no prayers delay
Approaching wrinkles, age, and tears,
Or wrest from death's all-conquering sway.

‡ With wine your hundred locks secure,
Some worthier heir your floors will stain,
Lavish of draughts more rich and pure,
Than our high-priests are wont to drain.

No modern poet would, or rather could, construct verses after this fashion.

It is in representations of the triumph of our immortal nature over the ills of mortality, of the patience with which they are borne, of the power by which they are overcome, in one word, of the moral qualities which suffering alone brings into action, and in those touches that awaken our best and tenderest affections for the sufferings of others, especially the innocent and helpless, that the sources of the highest pathos are to be found. All that is morally sublime springs upward from our severer trials ; and then, only when man feels the nobleness of his nature. Present the calamity nakedly to our view, and its contemplation is merely distressing; picture it in connexion with some effort of virtue, and a glory is spread over the whole. In the fall of D'Assas by Mrs. Hemans, (not one of the most remarkable of her productions,) a young officer, full of the thoughts of his home and the scenes of his earlier years, is represented as surprised and massacred by his enemies. The simple narrative of such a death naturally excites painful emotion, but this emotion is so wholly overborne, as but to give additional strength to the exaltation of feeling produced by the concluding verses :

" ' Silence ! ' in under-tones they cry —
' No whisper — not a breath !
The sound that warns thy comrades nigh
Shall sentence thee to death ! '

" — Still, at the bayonet's point he stood,
And strong to meet the blow ;
And shouted, 'midst his rushing blood,
' Arm, arm, Auvergne ! the foe ! '

" The stir, the tramp, the bugle-call, —
He heard their tumults grow ;
And sent his dying voice through all, —
' *Auvergne, Auvergne ! the foe !* ' "

We may compare the poem just quoted, with a passage from Virgil, which refers to circumstances somewhat similar, and has been praised as very pathetic, in the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, where Nisus perceives that Euryalus has fallen into the hands of his foes, and is just about to be slain.

" Tum vero, exterritus, amens,
Conclamat Nisus ; nec se celare tenebris

Amplius, aut tantum potuit perferre dolorem :
' Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum,
O Rutuli ! mea fraus omnis ; nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit : cœlum hoc et conscia sidera testor.
Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.'
Talia dicta dabat ; sed viribus ensis adactus
Transabiit costas." *

However conspicuous such a passage may be in an ancient poet, it would not, we believe, be regarded with great admiration in a modern.

In one of Miss Edgeworth's little stories for children, which are far better worth reading than most books for grown people, she says of the cottage of some poor woman, that *it was as clean as misery could make it.* There is a pathos in these few words, not unusual in her writings, but such as we can find in but a scanty number of writers before our own age. It has not been well understood, that the indirect expressions of suffering are far more powerful than the direct, and that we are much more affected by suppressed, than by unrestrained emotion. In but little of the poetry of past times is there any trace of quickness or delicacy of perception in regard to the modes or expressions of human feeling and passion ; for man himself had not become sufficiently refined for the exercise of such observation. Plato objects to Homer and the tragic poets of Greece, that they degraded men's minds by representing their heroes, when suffering, as pouring forth long lamentations, singing their sorrows and beating their breasts. † So far as they did so, there was nothing pathetic in their writings. Who indeed, in modern times, was ever able to imagine himself affected by the sorrows of Achilles for the death of Patroclus, or those of his mother, Thetis, in consequence ?

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* Then frightened, maddened, reckless in his woe,
Nisus starts forth, exclaiming to the foe ;
" Me ! me ! I did it ; turn your swords on me ;
Here the sole author of your loss you see ;
He nothing did, nor could do ; strike my breast ;
Ye heavens, and conscious stars, my truth attest ;
He has but loved too much his wretched friend."
While thus he spoke, he saw the blow descend.

† De Republicâ, Lib. x. p. 605. In the following passage, likewise, Plato speaks to the same purpose. " With reason, therefore, we may condemn the lamentations of celebrated men, and beg of Homer, and

" Then clouds of sorrow fell on Peleus' son,
And, grasping with both hands the ashes, down
He poured them on his head, his graceful brows
Dishonoring, and thick the sooty shower
Descending settled on his fragrant vest.
Then, stretched in ashes, at the vast extent
Of his whole length he lay, disordering wild
With his own hands, and rending off his hair.
The maidens, captived by himself in war
And by Patroclus, shrieking from the tent
Ran forth, and hemmed the glorious chief around.
All smote their bosoms, and all, fainting, fell.
On the other side, Antilochus, dissolved
In tears, held fast Achilles' hands, and groaned
Continually from his heart, through fear
Lest Peleus' son should perish self-destroyed.
With dreadful cries *he* rent the air; whose voice
Within the gulfs of ocean, where she sat
Beside her ancient sire, his mother heard,
And hearing, shrieked; around her, at the voice
Assembled all the Nereids of the deep."

We omit the names of the Nereids, which fill ten lines of the original:

" Each smote her breast,
And Thetis, loud lamenting, thus began."

But it is not to the moral world alone that religion has given a new character. It has spread life over the inanimate creation, giving it power to call up countless associations; so that the old tree under which we sat in childhood becomes to us as a friend, and the flowers speak to us of human sympathies and of God's love. Mere forms and colors have in themselves but little power over us. Their chief beauty is in the senti-

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the other poets, not to represent Achilles, the son of a goddess, as tossing himself about, lying now on his side, now on his back, and now on his face, then starting up and wandering, overcome by grief, along the seashore, nor as scattering ashes with both hands upon his hair, nor as weeping and bemoaning as he is elsewhere described." "If our youths," he says, "should listen to these things seriously, and not laugh at them as unworthily said, it can hardly be, that, when men, they will think such conduct unworthy of themselves, or exercise any restraint when urged by passion to the like words and actions, or be ashamed of indulging in lamentations and outcries, even under trifling afflictions." — De Republicâ, Lib. III. pp. 387, 388.

ments that gather round them at our approach, and have their birth-place within us; it is created by our own hearts, the flowing forth of our own moral feelings. When these feelings exist but in a low or torpid state, the material world becomes proportionally barren of loveliness. There are in ancient writers few descriptions of natural scenery capable of affording a vivid pleasure to the imagination, even of a modern reader, though in him the words may awaken associations unknown to the author. In the Georgics the prosaic nature of the subject is broken by frequent digressions, and we might expect to find some agreeable delineations of the charms of nature; but there is nothing affording proof

" That the soul which gives sense to her beauty was won."

Virgil's description of the preëminence of Italy over other countries is elaborate, and one might fancy beforehand, that it would be written with all the enthusiasm of a patriot as well as poet.

" Sed neque Medorum, silvæ ditissima, terra,
Nec pulcher Ganges, atque auro turbidus Hermus,
Laudibus Italiæ certent; non Bactra, neque Indi,
Totaque thuriferis Panchaïa pinguis arenis.
Hæc loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem
Invertêre, satis immanis dentibus hydri;
Nec galeis densisque virûm seges horruit hastis:
Sed gravidæ fruges et Bacchi Massicus humor
Implevêre; tenent oleæ armentaque læta.
Hinc bellator equus campo sese arduus infert;
Hinc albi, Clitumne, greges, et maxima taurus
Victima, sæpe tuo perfusi flumine sacro,
Romanos ad templa Deûm duxêre triumphos.
Hîc ver assiduum, atque alienis mensibus æstas;
Bis gravidæ pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbor.
At rabidæ tigres absunt, et sæva leonum
Semina; nec miseros fallunt aconita legentes;
Nec rapit immensos orbes per humum, neque tanto
Squameus in spiram tractu se colligit anguis.
Adde tot egregias urbes, operumque laborem,
Tot congesta manu præruptis oppida saxis,
Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros.
An mare, quod supra, memorem, quodque alluit infra?
Anne lacus tantos? te, Lari maxime, teque,
Fluctibus et fremitu assurgens, Benace, marino?

An memorem portus, Lucrinoque addita claustra,
Atque indignatum magnis stridoribus æquor,
Julia quâ ponto longe sonat unda refuso,
Tyrrhenusque fretis immittitur æstus Avernis ?
Hæc eadem argenti rivos ærisque metalla
Ostendit venis, atque auro plurima fluxit.
Hæc genus acre virûm, Marsos, pubemque Sabellam,
Assuetumque malo Ligurem, Volscosque verutos,
Extulit; hæc Decios, Marios, magnosque Camillos,
Scipiadas duros bello, et te, maxime Cæsar,
Qui, nunc extremis Asiæ jam victor in oris,
Imbellem avertis Romanis arcibus Indum.
Salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,
Magna virûm! tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes ;
Ascræumque cano Romana per oppida carmen." *

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* We give Mr. Sotheby's version. Almost all that presents even the commonplaces of poetry, is due to the translator.

"Yet nor the Median groves, nor rivers rolled,
Ganges, and Hermus, o'er their beds of gold,
Nor Ind, nor Bactra, nor the blissful land
Where incense spreads o'er rich Panchaia's sand,
Nor all that fancy paints in fabled lays,
Oh native Italy! transcend thy praise.
Though here no bulls beneath th' enchanted yoke
With fiery nostril o'er the furrow smoke,
No hydra teeth embattled harvest yield,
Spear and bright helmet bristling o'er the field ;
Yet golden corn each laughing valley fills,
The vintage reddens on a thousand hills,
Luxuriant olives spread from shore to shore,
And flocks unnumbered range the pastures o'er.
Hence the proud war-horse rushes on the foe ;
Clitumnus! hence thy herds, more white than snow,
And stately bull, that, of gigantic size,
Supreme of victims on the altar lies,
Bathed in thy sacred stream oft led the train,
When Rome in pomp of triumph decked the fane.
Here Spring perpetual leads the laughing Hours,
And Winter wears a wreath of summer flowers :
Th' o'erloaded branch twice fills with fruits the year,
And twice the teeming flocks their offspring rear.
Yet here no lion breeds, no tiger strays,
No tempting aconite the touch betrays,
No monstrous snake th' uncoiling volume trails,
Or gathers orb on orb his iron scales.

There is here great poverty of imagination and expression. The passage is essentially more statistical and geographical than poetical. It is almost destitute of any expression of sentiment. Compare it with the apostrophe to Caledonia,

" stern and wild,
Meet nurse of a poetic child."

From the want of sentiment and of moral associations, the descriptive language of the ancient poets is, in general, scanty and poor. It is for the most part drawn immediately from the perceptions of the senses, and has little to do with the invisible feelings and images, of which outward things become the symbols to a reflecting mind. It rarely gives them a moral being; its epithets are seldom imaginative; it paints to the eye; it calls up recollections of bodily rest and pleasure;* but it does not often address the heart.

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But many a peopled city towers around,
And many a rocky cliff with castle crowned,
And many an antique wall, whose hoary brow
O'ershades the flood that guards its base below.
Say, shall I add, enclosed on either side,
What seas defend thee, and what lakes divide?
Thine, mighty Larius? or, with surging waves,
Where, fierce as ocean, vext Benacus raves?
Havens and ports, the Lucrine's added mole,
Seas that enraged along their bulwark roll,
Where Julian waves reject th' indignant tide,
And Tuscan billows down Avernus glide?
Here brass and silver ores rich veins expose,
And pregnant mines exhaustless gold enclose.
Blest in thy race, in battle unsubdued
The Marsian youth, and Sabine's hardy brood,
By strenuous toil the bold Ligurians steeled,
And spear-armed Volsci that disdain to yield:
Camilli, Marii, Decii swell thy line,
And, thunderbolts of war, each Scipio, thine!
Thou Cæsar! chief, whose sword the East o'erpow'rs,
And the tamed Indian drives from Roman towers.
All hail, Saturnian earth! hail, loved of fame,
Land, rich in fruits, and men of mighty name!
For thee I dare the sacred founts explore,
For thee, the rules of ancient art restore,
Themes, once to glory raised, again rehearse,
And pour through Roman towns th' Ascræan verse."

* See Twining's "Dissertation on Poetic Imitation," prefixed to his "Translation of Aristotle's Art of Poetry."

Horace begins one of his odes thus :

" Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soracte : nec jam sustineant onus
Sylvæ laborantes, geluque
Flumina constiterint acuto ?" *

The epithets *white* mountain, *deep* snow, *sharp* frost, are all taken without addition immediately from the perceptions of the senses ; nor, considering the common prosaic use of *laboro*, in a similar sense, is the epithet *laboring* much more poetical ; yet the passage is as striking of its kind as most that may be found in Latin poetry. The lines are thus rendered by Dryden.

" Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow ;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the laboring woods below ;
And streams with icy fetters bound,
Benumbed and cramped to solid ground."

Dryden was not eminent for his love of nature or power of describing its beauties ; and a poet of livelier preceptions would hardly have changed the name of Soracte for the faint generalization, " yon mountain " ; yet something of the difference which we wish to point out between ancient and modern poetry, is here perceptible. Let us take from Mrs. Hemans, an example of the richly imaginative character of that of later times. We will give the beginning of the verses in which she describes herself as reading in an arbor, " The Talisman " of Scott. A particular interest attaches to them from the circumstance, that in the best portrait of her she is represented in this real or imaginary situation.

" There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water ; dark and deep
Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seemed but pictured glooms : a hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern tufts ; and a tender gleam
Of soft green light, as by the glowworm shed,

* See how Soracte stands white with deep snow ; the laboring woods cannot bear up under their load, and the streams are stopped by the sharp frost.

Came pouring through the woven beach boughs down,
And steep'd the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown,
A tale of Palestine.* — Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours,
A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies, and amber sunshine: brightly free,
On filmy wings, the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood-pigeon."

Every subject becomes rich in proportion to the wealth of the mind by which it is contemplated. The intellectual light that shines upon it, gives it its colors. Deficient as the ancient poets were in so many sources of thought and feeling that exist in modern times, they discover as imperfect a sensibility to most of the other pleasures of a refined taste as to those derived from the objects of nature. There is to be found, for instance, in their works scarcely a single passage, perhaps not one, in which the power of music, as blending in intimate union sensible and intellectual pleasures, is described with strong expression; yet what a treasury of glowing images and solemn thoughts this subject has opened to modern poets. We need not quote for illustration Mrs. Hemans's "Triumphant Music."

Through our strong sympathy with our fellow-men, we are deeply interested in the remains of antiquity, in the ruins that recall it to our thoughts, and in the histories which have come down to us, or rather in those histories as fashioned anew by our imagination, effacing and softening, filling up the rude outline, and coloring and embellishing at pleasure. In proportion as we have a more vivid conception of the virtues and excellences of which man is capable, so man, as such, becomes more an object of our regard. In looking back through the obscurity of time, the depravity that would have shocked us, if forced upon our observation, is partially lost in the darkness, and the bright traits of character shine out more distinctly. The dead of past ages are regarded with something of the same tenderness that we feel toward the dead whom we have known. At least we consent for a time to sacrifice our philosophy to an illusion, and instead of the Richard Cœur-de-Lion

"* Palestine. — Tales of the Crusaders."

of history, whose only marked characteristics were bodily strength and brutal hardihood, with those few gleams of goodness which nothing but the grossest sensuality can utterly extinguish, we consent for a time to take the Richard of Scott's "Ivanhoe"; or in fancying the Augustan age, are willing to forget that it took its name from

> "him who murdered Tully,
> That cold villain, Octavius."

Conformably to the laws of our better nature, our imagination is most readily attracted by what is most excellent in man. While viewing a beautiful tract of country with which we are not familiar, we can hardly refrain from idealizing its supposed inhabitants, and giving them somewhat of a poetical character, or, in other words, a character agreeable to our best feelings. So it is in casting our view over past ages. Our sympathies are excited for the hopes and fears, and the virtues, such as they were, of those who have lost all power to injure; and we may even fashion dim images of what they now are, as existing somewhere in the creation of God, divested perhaps of the evil that clung to them on earth. The idea of that moral purification and developement, which, we believe, is continually going on in the universe, may thus mingle with the contemplation of the past. It is in transferring us into a world in which grateful imaginations are blended with truth, and the harshness of present reality is shut out, that the poetic interest of antiquity principally consists.

Of this, modern poetry and fiction have abundantly availed themselves. But though a shadowy antiquity lay as a background to Greek and Roman civilization, yet it was rarely resorted to by the ancient poets as a source of pleasing or solemn emotions. To them the remoter ages were little more than a desert abounding with monstrous fictions, with licentious and savage divinities, half-brutal demigods, and heroes and chiefs hardly human, whose fabulous deeds and sufferings present nothing to recommend them to our sense of beauty. In the period following, history assumed at least an air of truth, and men appeared on the stage with human feelings, passions, and virtues. But in looking back upon their earlier history, the ancients seem to have felt but slightly those peculiar sentiments and trains of feeling, which the contemplation of antiquity now awakens in our breasts. In no ancient poet is there a

celebration of a hero of his country to be compared with Mrs. Hemans's lines on the Scottish patriot, Wallace, beginning

> "Rest with the brave, whose names belong
> To the high sanctity of song."

There is no appeal to the deeds of their fathers equal to her Spanish war-song, —

> "Fling forth the proud banner of Leon again ;
> Let the high word '*Castile*' go resounding through Spain" —

No poetic conception of antiquity is to be found resembling the introduction of her "Cathedral Hymn," —

> "A dim and mighty minster of old time,
> A temple, shadowy with remembrances
> Of the majestic past!" —

And above all, there is nothing so morally ennobling, so adapted to raise the character of a people, as the verses, by which she has conferred a great obligation on our country, her "Pilgrim Fathers."

But, beside the advantages afforded to a modern poet by the religious and moral improvement of our race, which it has been principally our object to point out, there are others at which we may glance. He may look back over many ages, and around upon all countries, and acquaint himself with man, as he has existed and exists under circumstances the most dissimilar. He may possess himself of all that knowledge of human nature, which has been gathered from long experience and wide observation and multiplied opportunities of comparison. He may, like Southey, construct poems, as wild and wondrous, and as morally beautiful as "Thalaba," or as rich with barbaric splendor as "The Curse of Kehama," from the rude materials of Arabian fiction or Hindoo mythology. The treasures of learning and science, so poor in ancient times, have through succeeding ages, been accumulating to furnish him with thoughts, illustrations, and images. Our conceptions are enlarged, our views raised, the physical as well as the moral universe has been continually opening to the view of man, and knowledge unfolding her ever-lengthening scroll, of which the ancients had scarcely read the first lines. It was a dream, ridiculed by Plato,* of the extravagant admirers of Homer,

* De Republicâ, Lib. x. p. 598, *seq.*

that all human and divine learning was to be found in his writings.

In the nature of things art is progressive; its theory and practice are gradually better understood, errors are discovered and corrected, new objects of attainment proposed, and visions of higher excellence revealed to the mind; and thus we may believe, that the character, principles, purposes, and means of poetry are now comprehended more justly than they were in former times.

But it may be said that in perfection of language, at least, the poets of Greece and Rome must remain unsurpassed. It may be doubted, however, whether we are qualified to pronounce this judgment in their favor. The harmonious flow of articulate sounds in the Greek and Latin languages, particularly in the Latin, is not to be readily attained in some of the principal languages of literary Europe. But if we speak of poetical beauty of expression and harmony of thought, we must recollect, that it is necessary to be acquainted with the train of shadowy associations which follow the direct meaning of a poetical word, before we can determine that word to be well chosen. But such acquaintance implies an intimate knowlege of the use of language and of the state of mind in those addressed, which, as regards the poetry of the ancients, it is very difficult to acquire, and, in many particulars, impossible, yet without which we are liable to fall into great mistakes, and may often be left in much uncertainty. Take, for example, the line, —

"Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum." *

It has been admired from the consonance of the sound with the sense. We understand the epithet *putris* to mean *dusty*, —the dusty plain; but this epithet is elsewhere applied to a rich, mellow soil, easily broken up, or to a sandy plain. According to either of these uses, it is apparently an epithet unsuitable from its associations to be given to a field described as shaken and resounding with the trampling of a body

* "Repeated peals of shouts are heard around:
The neighing coursers answer to the sound,
And shake with horny hoofs the solid ground."
*Dryden.*
"Loud shouts arise; the thundering coursers bound
Through clouds of dust, and paw the trembling ground."
*Pitt.*

of horse. As respects, likewise, the epithet *quadrupedans*, we may doubt whether any modern critic can explain why *quadrupedante sonitu* is more poetical in Virgil, than its equivalent "the sound of quadrupeds" would be in a modern poet if used to express the sound of horses.

Let us take another example:

> "Pastor cum *traheret* per freta navibus
> Idæis Helenam perfidus hospitam." *

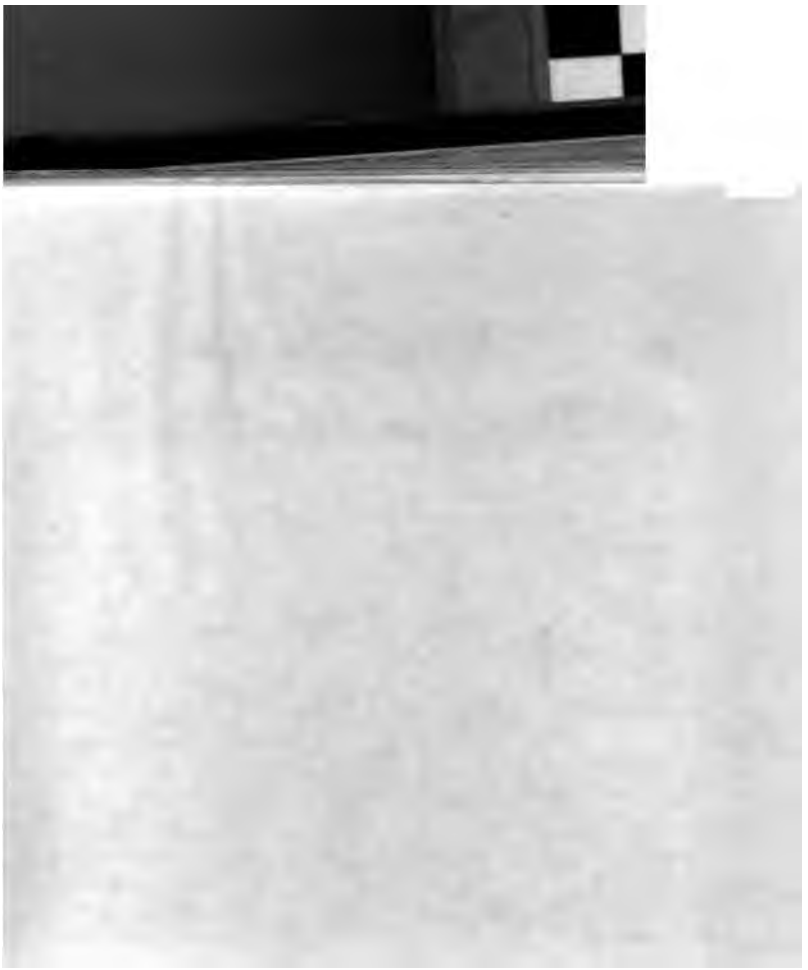
Why is the word *traheret* used, which as employed elsewhere would imply the taking away of Helen against her will? Does it refer to one version of the story according to which Paris did bear her away by force? Were this the case, one would naturally expect, considering the reproachful and denunciatory character of the ode, to find that idea brought out more distinctly. Is it intended to express the reluctance with which, though yielding to her love for Paris, she left her husband and her home? This conception is too refined for an ancient poet to trust to its being made apparent by so light a touch; if indeed we may suppose it to have entered his mind. Was *traheret*, then, intended, by its associations with an act of violence, to denote the rapidity and fear of the flight of Paris? Or was it merely employed *abusively*, to use a technical term, only with reference to a part of its signification, as words are not unfrequently used in poetry; though it is always an imperfection?

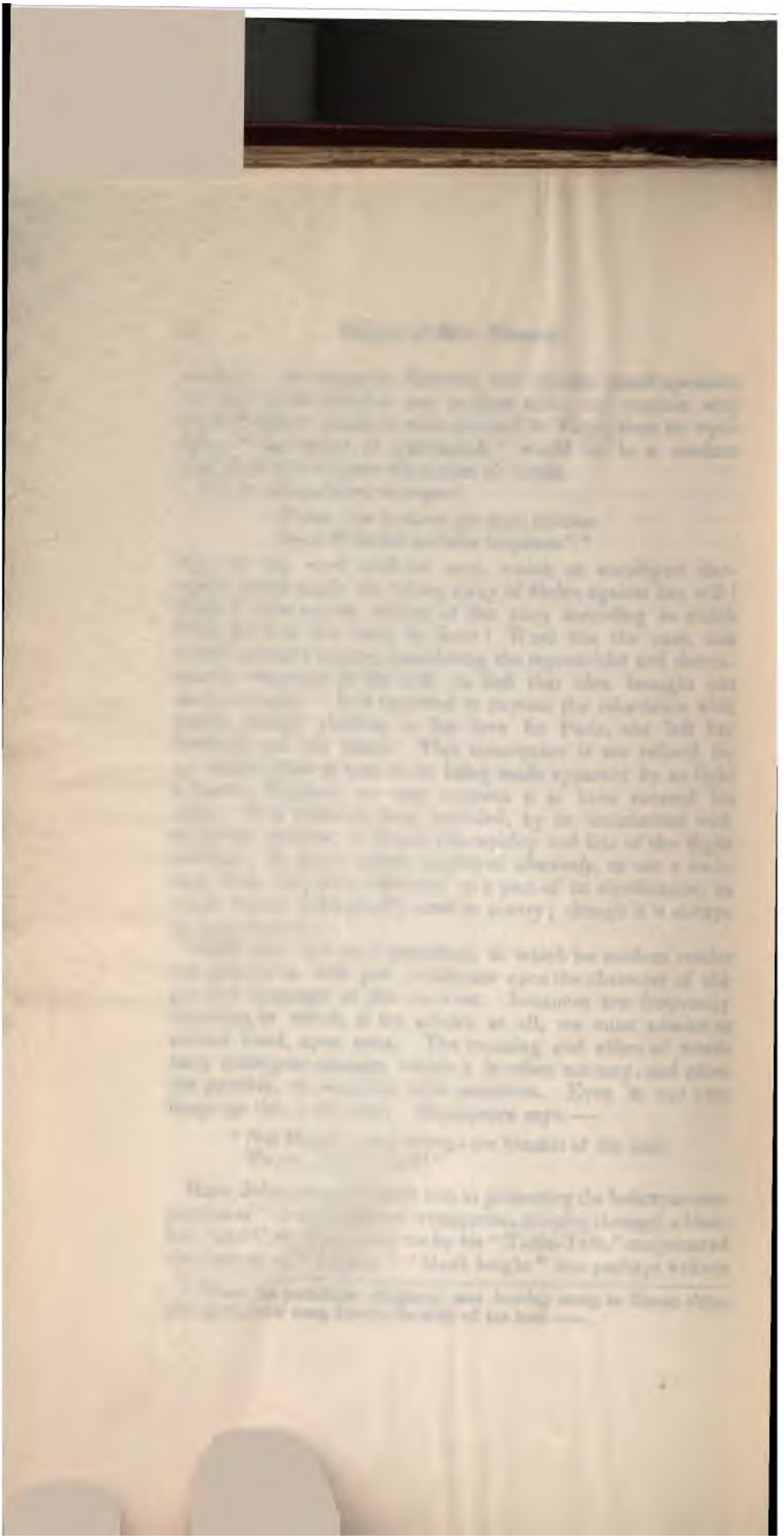
Such cases are very numerous, in which no modern reader can pronounce with just confidence upon the character of the poetical language of the ancients. Instances are frequently occurring in which, if we admire at all, we must admire at second hand, upon trust. The meaning and effect of words have undergone changes which it is often not easy, and often not possible, to ascertain with precision. Even in our own language this is the case. Shakspeare says, —

> "Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
> To cry, Hold! Hold!"

Here, Johnson understands him as presenting the ludicrous conception of "the ministers of vengeance, peeping through a blanket," and Coleridge, as we see by his "Table-Talk," conjectured that instead of "blanket" "blank height" was perhaps written

* When the perfidious shepherd *was bearing away*, in Idæan ships, through narrow seas, Helen, the wife of his host ——.





by Shakspeare. But by "Heaven" we conceive to be meant, not the ministers of vengeance, but the lights of heaven; and it is not unpoetical to speak of the moon and stars as peeping through clouds. With the word "blanket," our associations are trivial and low; but understand it merely as denoting a thick covering of darkness which closely enwraps the lights of heaven, and it suits well to its place. But our associations with the word are accidental, there is nothing intrinsically more mean in a blanket than a sheet, yet none would object to the expression of "a sheet of light." The fortunes of the words, only, have been different, and that, in all probability, since the time of Shakspeare, considering his use of this word, and the corresponding use of the word *rug* by Drayton.*

If such be the character of poetical language, it is clear, that to judge with critical accuracy of that of a distant age or even a foreign land, requires uncommon knowledge and discrimination as well as an accurate taste; while, unfortunately, profound scholarship and cultivated and elegant habits of mind have very rarely been united in the study of the ancient poets. The supposition of a peculiar felicity of expression in their writings is to be judged of, in most cases, rather by extrinsic probabilities, which do not favor it, than by any direct and clear evidence of it that can be produced. We are very liable in this particular to be biassed by prepossession and authority; our imaginations often deceive us; we create the beauty which we fancy that we find.

There is perhaps no poet, in whose productions the characteristics of which we have spoken as giving a superiority to the poetry of later times over that which has preceded, appear more strikingly than in those of Mrs. Hemans. When, after reading such works as she has written, we turn over the volumes of a collection of English poetry, like that of Chalmers, we cannot but perceive that the greater part of it appears more worthless and distasteful than before. Much is evidently the work of barren and unformed, vulgar and vicious minds, of individuals without any conception of poetry as the glowing expression of what is most noble in our nature, and often with no title to the name of poet, but from having put into metre thoughts too mean for prose. Such writings as those of Mrs. Hemans at once afford evidence of the advance of our

* See examples in the notes to Shakspeare.





race, and are among the most important means of its furth
purification and progress. The minds, which go forth fro
their privacy to act with strong moral power upon thousan
and ten thousands of other minds, are the real agents in a
vancing the character of man, and improving his conditio
They are instruments of the invisible operations of the spirit
God.

A, N,



should it accomplish the objects for which it is intended. And with this assurance, the members of it may well console themselves for the want of that more noisy celebrity, which attends the discovery of a Papua or a New Holland, and the bringing home a whole menagerie of kangaroos and ornithorhynchi. Commensurate, however, with the advantages expected from their success, will be the general disappointment in case of failure. Indeed, a peculiar responsibility rests upon the conductors of this expedition; for upon their acquitting themselves to the public satisfaction, in this instance, will depend probably the degree of interest taken in future enterprises of the kind. They must consider themselves, in fact, as pioneers, who, if they fail with the amplest preparations, cannot expect others, less favored, to follow in their unfinished course, and complete the design which they have found impracticable.

With this warning, and with the best wishes for their successful return, we bid them, for ourselves, "God speed." And, hoping that they will leave behind, on their native shores, no other sentiment but one of the most friendly and patriotic desire for the prosperous issue of their enterprise, we cannot dismiss the subject, without saying a few words in deprecation of a feeling, to which certain well-known untoward occurrences, connected with the outfit, have given rise. There is no denying, that the course taken by Commodore Jones for the exclusion of Lieutenants Slidell and Wilkes from the commands for which they had been selected, (both, gentlemen most favorably known for their professional merit, and the former, one of the chief favorites of the country, for the distinction he has won in its literature,) has been generally regarded with strong disapprobation. There need be no hesitation in saying, that if, at the proper stage of the business, the Secretary had transferred the command to other hands, he would have better consulted the dignity of the government, the claims of the important service projected, and the general sense of the nation. The resentment naturally awakened by the publication of the extraordinary correspondence, to which we refer, has had time to subside. But if it has been succeeded by a settled distrust of the commander, as having proved himself wanting in some of those qualities of magnanimity and wisdom, which are reasonably looked for in one invested with so responsible a charge, this is a sentiment, we

would urge, which ought not to be entertained, to an undue extent, to the prejudice of so important an undertaking. One great mistake should not be thought enough to prove an utterly incompetent man, and Commodore Jones has meritoriously served his country in other times, when it was in a condition to owe much to the services of a brave and skilful sailor. Since it seems, in this business, it is a determined thing, that he shall have his country's honor in his keeping, we hold it to be the duty of every good citizen, to hope the best from his management. Perhaps he cannot reasonably expect, that any future questionable conduct will be viewed with the same indulgence, as if he had not already rendered himself so seriously obnoxious to complaint. But, on the other hand, he could desire no nobler opportunity than he possesses, for reinstating himself in the public favor so unhappily put at hazard.

To return for a moment to the first of the works under review, — the author of the "History of Circumnavigation" promises us, in his preface, a Continuation, which shall contain accounts of all the voyages of importance since the days of Cook; accompanied by a map comprising the latest discoveries and surveys. For this publication we shall look with considerable interest. The original histories of the modern French and German voyages, are usually too expensive to be generally known, except by abridgments; and the map, if well executed, will be of especial value, as a means of estimating the additions to it, anticipated from our own expedition.

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Andrews Norton.

ART. VI. — *Letters of Lucius M. Piso, from Palmyra, to his Friend, Marcus Curtius, at Rome. Now first translated and published.* New York: C. S. Francis. Boston: J. H. Francis. 1837. 2 vols. 12mo. By William Ware

THIS work has appeared since the publication of our last number, and seems to be rapidly gaining the reputation which it so well deserves. It is an historical romance. Piso, the imagined author of the Letters, is supposed to have visited Palmyra, toward the close of the third century, to have become acquainted with Zenobia and her court, to have seen the

city in its glory, and to have witnessed its destruction by Aurelian, (A. D. 273.)

The scene, the characters, and the historical events are finely selected ; for they abound with striking images and associations. We are carried back to Palmyra, a city the history of which is unknown, rising in the desert, shown to the world but for a single age, in the height of its almost unparalleled splendor, and then becoming the spoil of a Roman army and its savage leader, who laid waste in a few days what was never to be restored. After this, a cloud of obscurity settled over it, and its ancient glories were almost regarded as fabulous ; till, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, a few English merchants, from the factory at Aleppo, found their way to its wonderful ruins, and brought back a tale, for which they scarcely obtained credit, — which indeed caused their veracity to be questioned. Zenobia, the queen of this city, has been a name for poetry and painting, and history represents her as a woman of extraordinary intellect and beauty, united with great strength of character ; an Asiatic princess, with Grecian refinement and Roman hardihood. Her principal minister, who is very happily introduced in the present work, was the philosopher, Longinus. Her victor, Aurelian, was the son of a Pannonian peasant, originally an adventurer, a common soldier ; who, by his courage, ferocity, bodily strength, power of control, and skill in war, had raised himself to be the military despot of the Roman Empire, and kept himself at its head, almost five years, before his turn for assassination came. With perhaps occasional outbreaks of something like a generous impulse, he was on the whole only less hateful than some of his predecessors, because he did not, like them, mix up his atrocious cruelties with the utter vileness of the most loathsome sensuality.

The complete ruin of Palmyra followed its destruction by Aurelian. As regards that city, he might have rivalled the boast of Attila, that *the grass grew not where his horse's hoofs had trod*. Lying as an oasis in the desert, between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, and favored with an abundant supply of water, it rose rapidly to wealth and civilization, as an emporium of the commerce of the East. Its Grecian name, Palmyra, and its Eastern name, Tadmor, were equally expressive of the great number of palm-trees which flourished around it. In the middle of the last century, there was but

one remaining; the sands of the desert had encroached to its walls, and only a few Arab huts were to be found among its ruins.

At that time (in 1751), it was visited by the travellers Dawkins and Wood, to whom we are indebted for our principal information respecting its present state. Their published drawings and measurements are satisfactory; but are accompanied with only a very brief narrative. After a journey of six days from Aleppo, through the desert, the travellers arrived about noon in view of "Tadmor's marble wastes." "The hills opening," says Mr. Wood, "discovered to us all at once the greatest quantity of ruins we had ever seen, all of white marble; and beyond them, toward the Euphrates, a flat waste, as far as the eye could reach, without any object, which showed either life or motion. It is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more striking than this view." The remains of the city lay within a circuit of about three miles, which appeared as if it had been filled with public edifices. The whole ground was covered with heaps of marble; yet among them the ruins of vast buildings were still conspicuous, "the greatest and most entire," says Wood, which the travellers had seen. Among these two were preëminent; — one of them, the Temple of the Sun, standing in a court, more than seven hundred feet square, which was enclosed by a wall; adorned on the outside with pilasters, and originally with a double row of interior columns, forming as it were cloisters; the temple itself being in the midst of the area, surrounded by columns fifty feet high; — the other, an open portico, stretching three quarters of a mile in length, many of the pillars of which are yet standing. All the edifices, of which any considerable ruins are extant, are supposed to have been erected during the period of less than three centuries which intervened between the Christian era and the destruction of the city. The style of architecture is almost throughout Corinthian; but the vastness of the buildings has an Egyptian character.

It was this city which Piso, the supposed author of the Letters, is imagined to have seen in its glory; and to have given his first impressions from its view, in the following passage. We quote a few lines, preceding, descriptive of the desert surrounding this cultivated spot.

"Upon this boundless desert we now soon entered. The scene which it presented was more dismal than I can describe.

A red, moving sand, — or hard and baked by the heat of a sun, such as Rome never knows, — low, gray rocks just rising here and there above the level of the plain, with now and then the dead and glittering trunk of a vast cedar, whose roots seemed as if they had outlasted centuries, — the bones of camels and elephants, scattered on either hand, dazzling the sight by reason of their excessive whiteness, — at a distance occasionally an Arab of the desert, for a moment surveying our long line, and then darting off to his fastnesses, — these were the objects which, with scarce any variation, met our eyes during the four wearisome days that we dragged ourselves over this wild and inhospitable region."

* * * * *

"I was still buried in reflection, when I was aroused by the shout of those who led the caravan, and who had attained the summit of a little rising ground, saying, 'Palmyra! Palmyra!' I urged forward my steed, and in a moment the most wonderful prospect I ever beheld, — no, I cannot except even Rome, — burst upon my sight. Flanked by hills of considerable elevation on the East, the city filled the whole plain below as far as the eye could reach, both toward the North and toward the South. This immense plain was all one vast and boundless city. It seemed to me to be larger than Rome. Yet I knew very well that it could not be, — that it was not. And it was some time before I understood the true character of the scene before me, so as to separate the city from the country, and the country from the city, which here wonderfully interpenetrate each other, and so confound and deceive the observer. For the city proper is so studded with groups of lofty palm-trees, shooting up among its temples and palaces, and on the other hand, the plain in its immediate vicinity is so thickly adorned with magnificent structures of the purest marble, that it is not easy, nay it is impossible at the distance at which I contemplated the whole, to distinguish the line which divided the one from the other. It was all city and all country, all country and all city. Those which lay before me I was ready to believe were the Elysian Fields. I imagined that I saw under my feet the dwellings of purified men and of gods. Certainly they were too glorious for the mere earth-born. There was a central point, however, which chiefly fixed my attention, where the vast Temple of the Sun, stretched upward its thousand columns of polished marble to the heavens, in its matchless beauty casting into the shade every other work of art of which the world can boast. I have stood before the Parthenon, and have almost worshipped that divine achievement of the immortal Phidias. But it is a toy by the side of this bright crown of the Eastern

capital. I have been at Milan, at Ephesus, at Alexandria, at Antioch; but in neither of those renowned cities have I beheld any thing that I can allow to approach in united extent, grandeur, and most consummate beauty, this almost more than work of man. On each side of this, the central point, there rose upward slender pyramids, — pointed obelisks, — domes of the most graceful proportions, columns, arches, and lofty towers, for number and for form, beyond my power to describe. These buildings, as well as the walls of the city, being all either of white marble, or of some stone as white, and being everywhere in their whole extent interspersed, as I have already said, with multitudes of overshadowing palm-trees, perfectly filled and satisfied my sense of beauty, and made me feel for the moment, as if in such a scene I should love to dwell, and there end my days."—Vol. I. pp. 20, 21 – 23.

This passage will not excite too high expectations respecting the work, which is written throughout in a natural, agreeable, well-sustained style, though with a few negligences, here and there, which a slight revision might remove, and, also, as it seemed to us, a few repetitions of the same essential idea or conception. The magnificent architecture of Palmyra, the Temple of the Sun, and the Long Portico are finely brought into view in other parts of the work. In general, whatever is intended to be conformed to history and fact is represented correctly; and it may therefore be worth while to mention the error, in the passage quoted, of placing the hills near Palmyra, on the east, instead of the west; where it appears they stand from the account of Wood. While upon this head, we may as well notice another error of little more importance, but connected with a fact of some curiosity. Piso, in one of his letters, (Vol. I. p. 56,) says;— "Returning, we passed through the arches of a vast aqueduct, which pours into the city a river of the purest water. This is the most striking object, and noblest work of art, without the walls." So a Roman aqueduct might have been spoken of. But there was, at Palmyra, no aqueduct constructed upon arches. It is a remarkable fact, that its principal supply of water was through an aqueduct *built under ground*, which has been broken, says Wood, about half a league from the city. He gives a plan of it, by which its interior appears to have been about four feet in width, by eight feet in depth. This subterranean construction is, as far as we know, unique among ancient watercourses. That the Romans were acquainted with the fact, that water when confined will rise to the height of its source, seems now

to be the prevalent opinion. But the passage of Pliny which has been principally relied upon is a little suspicious. He says; "Water confined in lead rises to the height of its source;"—*Aqua in plumbo subit altitudinem exortûs sui.* If he were acquainted with the general law of fluids, of which this is an example, why did he not express it in general terms, instead of stating a particular fact. We are reminded of what Horace says of the water, that "strives to burst its case of lead," *tendit rumpere plumbum*, when speaking of that which was conveyed through Rome, in leaden pipes from the reservoirs of the aqueducts. Considering the intellectual habits of the Romans, it would not be strange that a particular phenomenon should be known to them, without any inquiry following by which it might be traced to a general law.

It should be observed, however, that in a subsequent part of the work, there is mention of the ruins of a subterranean aqueduct, through which Zenobia is represented as escaping from the city when it was environed by the Roman army. But this is described as of much larger dimensions than that which actually existed.

We are not about to dwell at length on the characters and incidents of the "Letters from Palmyra"; for the work itself is much better worth reading, than such an account as we might give. Zenobia, except that a dazzling haze of romance is thrown round her, appears as she is represented in history. Perhaps we should except also her being drawn as a female warrior, ready to engage personally in battle, as is also her friend Fausta. For ourselves, we could well have spared this trait in the character of either. But our associations with ancient amazons, with the swift-footed Camilla, for instance, are such, that we do not class them with those who make the nearest approach to their bravery in modern times. Generally it may be remarked, that to the higher and more prominent characters, there is ascribed a nobleness and refinement greater, some may think, than the nature of an historical romance requires; for something of this sort, some idealizing of the personages of history it does require; as is shown in the works of the great master of the art. No character, perhaps, on the whole is more successfully managed than that of Longinus.

From a charge that has been brought against Zenobia, of having exposed Longinus to the vengeance of Aurelian, in

order to save herself, a charge that appears in most modern accounts of her, and seems to have gained general credit, she is, we think, successfully vindicated by the author of the Letters, in a note to his second volume. We were led in consequence to look at the narrative of Gibbon. It is characteristic of that historian. He thus writes.

"When the Syrian queen was brought into the presence of Aurelian, he sternly asked her, 'How she had presumed to rise in arms against the emperors of Rome.' The answer of Zenobia was a prudent mixture of respect and firmness. 'Because I disdained to consider as Roman emperors an Aureolus or a Gallienus. You alone I acknowledge as my conqueror and my sovereign.' But as female fortitude is commonly artificial, so it is seldom steady or consistent. The courage of Zenobia deserted her in the hour of trial; she trembled at the angry clamors of the soldiers, who called aloud for her immediate execution, forgot the generous despair of Cleopatra, which she had proposed to herself as a model, and ignominiously purchased life by the sacrice of her fame and her friends. It was to their counsels, which governed the weakness of her sex, that she imputed the guilt of her obstinate resistance; it was on their heads that she directed the vengeance of the cruel Aurelian. The fame of Longinus, who was included among the numerous and perhaps innocent victims of her fear, will survive that of the queen who betrayed, or the tyrant who condemned him. Genius and learning were incapable of moving a fierce unlettered soldier, but they had served to elevate and harmonize the soul of Longinus. Without uttering a complaint, he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing comfort on his afflicted friends."

For the answer with which Gibbon furnishes Zenobia, his only authority is the following passage from Trebellius Pollio. "When, upon her being taken captive by Aurelian, and brought into his presence, he thus addressed her; 'Why, Zenobia, have you dared to insult Roman emperors?' she is reported to have said; 'I acknowledge you as an emperor for you are a conqueror. I did not regard Gallienus, Aureolus, and the others as princes. Thinking Victoria like myself, I wished to share the empire with her, could we be brought into neighbourhood.'"* This is not very like the prudent mixture of respect and firmness ascribed to her by the

* Hist. August., ed. Schrevelii, page 791.

modern historian. Nor is it probable that even this answer, which is mentioned by Trebellius only as report, was really made by Zenobia. Victoria or Victorina was the mother of Victorinus, who, amid a rapid succession of assassinations and changes, obtained the command of the army in Gaul, and she appears to have shared in his short-lived power. But her name has almost disappeared from history; and if Zenobia had ever heard it, she would not probably have considered her as rivalling herself. The remark of Gibbon, respecting female fortitude, is like a large proportion of those appearing throughout his work in the form of apothegms, which, whether true or false, are trivialities disguised by the formal style of their annunciation. In endurance, woman has shown herself not inferior to man. That Zenobia had proposed the generous despair of Cleopatra for her model, is only an embellishment. For the narrative of the death of Longinus, we follow the author of the Letters in quoting the passage on which it rests, from Zosimus, who wrote more than a century after the destruction of Palmyra.

"Aurelian, returning to Emesa, sat in judgment upon Zenobia and those who had been connected with her. Then she related the causes of the war, exculpating herself, and bringing forward many others as leading her on, she being only a woman. Among them was Longinus, of whom there are writings extant, which afford great profit to such as are desirous of instruction, who, being convicted of the charges brought against him, was immediately condemned to death by the king. This he bore so nobly as to comfort those who compassionated his misfortune."

Such is the story which Gibbon has dressed in modern costume. To the confutation of it in the note before referred to, it may be added, that Zosimus was so ill-informed respecting Zenobia, and so careless of obtaining correct information, that in regard to her death he only gives a report, that, as Aurelian was carrying her with him to Rome, she died either through disease or voluntary hunger; * though two contemporary historians (Trebellius Pollio and Vopiscus) speak of her as having been led in triumph by the emperor. Zosimus, as if to despatch the whole business at once, proceeds with the same report, as stating that all those who shared in her rebellion, except her son, were drowned in the Hellespont. He

* Lib. I. c. 59.

had before related, that some of them, at least, were put to death with Longinus. Trebellius Pollio, who could not have written more than about thirty years after the destruction of Palmyra, says, that the descendants of Zenobia were remaining among the nobility of Rome; and that it was reported that she lived with her children like a Roman matron; "Aurelian," he says, "having given her an estate at Tibur (Tivoli) still called by her name, not far from the palace of Adrian."*

We have quoted from the Letters a passage which shows Palmyra at the height of its prosperity. We will contrast it with another which describes its sack and ruin. Piso is supposed to have retired from the city with the family of a noble Roman, resident in Palmyra, Gracchus, the father of Fausta, shortly before the event, and to be viewing the scene from one of the neighbouring heights.

"After one day of preparation and one of assault, the city has fallen, and Aurelian again entered in triumph. This time in the spirit of revenge and retaliation. It is evident, as we look on, horror-struck, that no quarter is given, but that a general massacre has been ordered, both of soldier and citizen. We can behold whole herds of the defenceless populace escaping from the gates or over the walls, only to be pursued, — hunted, — and slaughtered by the remorseless soldiers. And thousands upon thousands have we seen driven over the walls, or hurled from the battlements of the lofty towers to perish, dashed upon the rocks below."

* * * * *

"No sooner had the evening of this fatal day set in, than a new scene of terrific sublimity opened before us, as we beheld flames beginning to ascend from every part of the city. They grew and spread, till they presently appeared to wrap all objects alike in one vast sheet of fire. Towers, pinnacles, and domes, after glittering awhile in the fierce blaze, one after another fell and disappeared in the general ruin. The Temple of the Sun stood long untouched, shining almost with the brightness of the sun itself, its polished shafts and sides reflecting the surrounding fire with an intense brilliancy. We hoped that it might escape, and were certain that it would, unless fired from within, — as, from its insulated position, the flames from the neighbouring buildings could not reach it. But we watched not long ere from its western extremity the fire broke forth, and warned us that that peerless monument of human genius, like all else, would soon

* Hist. August., pages 772, 791.

crumble to the ground. To our amazement, however, and joy, the flames, after having made great progress, were suddenly arrested, and by some cause extinguished, — and the vast pile stood towering in the centre of the desolation, of double size, as it seemed, from the fall and disappearance of so many of the surrounding structures."

* * * * *

"On the third day after the capture of the city and the massacre of the inhabitants, the army of the 'conqueror and destroyer' withdrew from the scene of its glory, and again disappeared beyond the desert. I sought not the presence of Aurelian while before the city, for I cared not to meet him drenched in the blood of women and children. But as soon as he and his legions were departed, we turned toward the city, as children to visit the dead body of a parent.

"No language which I can use, my Curtius, can give you any just conception of the horrors which met our view on the way to the walls and in the city itself. For more than a mile before we reached the gates, the roads, and the fields on either hand, were strewed with the bodies of those who, in their attempts to escape, had been overtaken by the enemy and slain. Many a group of bodies did we notice, evidently those of a family, the parents and the children, who, hoping to reach in company some place of security, had all, — and without resistance, apparently, — fallen a sacrifice to the relentless fury of their pursuers. Immediately in the vicinity of the walls, and under them, the earth was concealed from the eye by the multitudes of the slain, and all objects were stained with the one hue of blood. Upon passing the gates and entering within those walls which I had been accustomed to regard as embracing in their wide and graceful sweep, the most beautiful city of the world, my eye met nought but black and smoking ruins, fallen houses and temples, the streets choked with piles of still blazing timbers and the half-burned bodies of the dead. As I penetrated farther into the heart of the city, and to its better-built and more spacious quarters, I found the destruction to be less, — that the principal streets were standing, and many of the more distinguished structures. But everywhere, — in the streets, — upon the porticos of private and public dwellings, — upon the steps and within the very walls of the temples of every faith, — in all places, the most sacred as well as the most common, lay the mangled carcasses of the wretched inhabitants. None, apparently, had been spared. The aged were there, with their bald or silvered heads, — little children and infants, — women, the young, the beautiful, the good, — all were there slaughtered in every imaginable way, and presenting to the eye

spectacles of horror and of grief enough to break the heart and craze the brain. For one could not but go back to the day and the hour when they died, and suffer with these innocent thousands a part of what they suffered, when, the gates of the city giving way, the infuriated soldiery poured in, and with death written in their faces and clamoring on their tongues, their quiet houses were invaded, and, resisting or unresisting, they all fell together, beneath the murderous knives of the savage foe. What shrieks then rent and filled the air, — what prayers of agony went up to the gods for life to those whose ears on mercy's side were adders', — what piercing supplications that life might be taken and honor spared. The apartments of the rich and the noble presented the most harrowing spectacles, where the inmates, delicately nurtured and knowing of danger, evil, and wrong only by name and report, had first endured all that nature most abhors, and then there, where their souls had died, were slain by their brutal violators with every circumstance of most demoniac cruelty. Happy for those who, like Gracchus, foresaw the tempest and fled. These calamities have fallen chiefly upon the adherents of Antiochus; but among them, alas! were some of the noblest and most honored families of the capital. Their bodies now lie blackened and bloated upon their door-stones, — their own halls have become their tombs." — Vol. II. pp. 229 – 233.

To understand what follows, it must be told that Piso had half become a Christian.

"The silence of death and of ruin rests over this once and but so lately populous city. As I stood upon a high point which overlooked a large extent of it, I could discern no signs of life, except here and there a detachment of the Roman guard dragging forth the bodies of the slaughtered citizens, and bearing them to be burned or buried. This whole people is extinct. In a single day these hundred thousands have found a common grave. Not one remains to bewail or bury the dead. Where are the anxious crowds, who, when their dwellings have been burned, eagerly rush in as the flames have spent themselves, to sorrow over their smoking altars, and pry with busy search among the hot ashes, as if perchance they may yet rescue some lamented treasure, or bear away, at least, the bones of a parent or child, buried beneath the ruins? They are not here. It is broad day, and the sun shines bright, but not a living form is seen lingering about these desolated streets and squares. Birds of prey are already hovering round, and alighting without apprehension of disturbance wherever the banquet invites them; and soon as the shadows of evening shall fall, the hyena of the desert will be here to gorge himself upon what they have left, having scented

afar off upon the tainted breeze the fumes of the rich feast here spread for him. These Roman grave-diggers from the Legion of Bassus, are alone upon the ground to contend with them for their prize. O, miserable condition of humanity! Why is it that to man have been given passions, which he cannot tame, and which sink him below the brute! Why is it that a few ambitious are permitted by the Great Ruler, in the selfish pursuit of their own aggrandizement, to scatter in ruin, desolation, and death, whole kingdoms, — making misery and destruction the steps by which they mount up to their seats of pride! O, gentle doctrine of Christ!—doctrine of love and of peace, when shall it be that I and all mankind shall know thy truth, and the world smile with a new happiness under thy life-giving reign!"—Vol. II. pp. 234, 235.

This is very powerful description, but not exaggerated. It only presents to our imagination, mingled with expressions of human feeling, the detail of events, that Aurelian himself sums up in a few lines of a letter, * in which no touch of remorse betrays that the writer belonged to our race. "Aurelian Augustus to Ceionius Bassus. Palmyrenes enough have been slain and cut to pieces. We have not spared the women; we have killed the infants; we have slaughtered the old men; we have destroyed the peasants. To whom shall we leave the country or city? Those who remain must be spared. For we trust that so few will be corrected by the punishment of so many." And he then passes on, with the same coolness, to speak of repairing the Temple of the Sun. Vopiscus, who reckons Aurelian among the few excellent emperors from Augustus to Constantius Chlorus, describes this letter as "exhibiting an acknowledgment of the most savage fury;" *confessionem immanissimi furoris ostentans.* Gibbon speaks of it with more calmness, and only on a later occasion makes some philosophical remarks upon the character of Aurelian; "He was naturally of a severe disposition. A peasant and a soldier, his nerves yielded not easily to the impression of sympathy; and he could sustain without emotion the sight of tortures and death. Trained from his earliest youth in the exercise of arms, he set too small a value on the life of a citizen." The historian adds, that "His love of justice often became a blind and furious passion." If so, it was a remarkable transformation.

One characteristic of the "Letters from Palmyra," from

* Preserved by Vopiscus. Hist. August., page 866.

which they derive much of their interest, consists in the just views they afford of the condition of mankind during the period to which they relate. Facts are brought distinctly before us, so as to produce a right impression of the age;—the merciless and rapacious character of its continual wars, the widely-spread miseries of private slavery, the absence of a true standard of right, and the religious darkness of the pagan world. Nor are these painful features made too prominent; a benevolent and cheerful tone of feeling pervades the work; the picture is brightened by the conception of the holiday joyousness of Palmyra, by the amiable or generous traits of character ascribed to most of the principal personages, and especially by the light of Christianity, which appears as having risen above the horizon. Ancient history has often been so written in modern times that the reader, unless he be more than commonly attentive and thoughtful, will gain no correct notion of its proper subject, of the men of former times of whom it proposes to give an account. He will learn little more than names, events, and dates. He will have little idea of the real state of civilization, of the forms of society, of the modes of life, the feelings, occupations, and enjoyments of the generality of men, of the passions, vices, impulses, and principles by which they were governed, of the point to which intellectual culture had attained, and of the extent of its diffusion, or consequently, of the aspect under which human nature presented itself, so widely different from what it has assumed in modern times. The historian wants a philosophical comprehension of what he is relating. The facts of the age of which he treats are insulated in his mind, not grouped together so as to form a consistent and striking picture, not seen in their relations, not viewed comparatively with those of other periods and different states of our race. He has not imagination to discern the details necessarily involved in general statements; nor penetration, knowledge of human nature, and moral sensibility to appreciate as he ought the particulars which he brings together. He cannot withdraw himself from the circle of the age in which he lives. His modern associations cling round the events and characters of antiquity, and hide their real features. He limits his views to prominent individuals, concerning whom our information is often so uncertain, and overlooks the actual character and state of the mass of men, which, for the most part, there are documents enough to illustrate. As

shown by him, a veil lies over it, beneath which only the common outline of humanity is to be seen.

In regard to Greece, the excellent history of Mitford is of another character. But of the Roman empire we have no truly instructive account, except so far as the late work of Sismondi supplies the deficiency. In the history of Gibbon we doubt whether there are more errors arising merely from want of information or want of care, than might reasonably be expected in so voluminous a work, embracing such a variety of topics. It is the compilation of an industrious scholar. But in treating of the history of Christianity, especially in his earlier volumes, his suppressions of the truth, the very disproportioned prominence which he gives to particular facts, his quotations of single passages without the explanation which would change their aspect, his insinuations of what is false without the direct expression of it, his language hovering on the bounds of the ironical and the serious, so that it may be understood in the former sense, and defended in the latter, and his sneering and injurious tone, the result of utter incapacity to feel or estimate the moral interest of the subject, produce the effect of the grossest misrepresentation. In the other portions of his history, there is the want of a thinking and reasoning spirit to vivify the mass of facts. To the title of philosopher, which he particularly affected, he has no claim. He has given the detail of events, during a long period, with occasional striking expressions, and strokes of wit, but he has not given its history. He has not connected those events with their essential causes ; nor viewed them as characteristic of the condition of man. His work presents a series of changes seemingly accidental ; for the reasons are not made apparent, why the course of things might not have been very different from what it was, the same general state of society existing. His moral temperament, likewise, was as defective as his philosophical. It is not merely that he was an infidel, of the French school of Voltaire, nor that a trait of indecency which he could introduce in a note or insinuate in the text, was a lure that easily drew him aside from the serious and honorable purposes of history ; but we feel throughout his history the absence of a just estimate of men and things, an absence of moral discrimination and sentiment. Though without an extraordinary number of mistakes arising from mere want of scholarship, his work is a *misrepresentation* throughout. Every thing is modernized

whom he hath seen, how shall he love God, whom he hath not seen?" This, it may be, Roman, is the first sentence you have ever heard from the Christian books.'

"'I am obliged to confess that it is,' I replied. 'I have heretofore lived in an easy indifference toward all religions. The popular religion of my country I early learned to despise. I have perused the philosophers, and examined their systems, from Pythagoras to Seneca, and am now, what I have long been, a disciple of none but Pyrrho. My researches have taught me only how the more ingeniously to doubt. Wearied at length with a vain inquiry after truth that should satisfy and fill me, I suddenly abandoned the pursuit, with the resolve never to resume it. I was not even tempted to depart from this resolution when Christianity offered itself to my notice; for I confounded it with Judaism, and for that, as a Roman, I entertained too profound a contempt to bestow upon it a single thought. I must acknowledge that the reports which I heard, and which I sometimes read, of the marvellous constancy and serenity of the Christians, under accumulated sufferings and wrongs, interested my feelings in their behalf; and the thought often arose, "Must there not be truth to support such heroism?" But the world went on its way, and I with it, and the Christians were forgotten. To a Christian, on my voyage across the Mediterranean, I owe much, for my first knowledge of Christianity, To the Princess Julia I owe a larger debt still. And now from your lips, long accustomed to declare its truths, I have heard what makes me truly desirous to hear the whole of that, which, in the little glimpses I have been able to obtain, has afforded so real a satisfaction.'

"'If you studied the Christian books,' said the recluse, 'you would be chiefly struck, perhaps, with the plainness and simplicity of the doctrines there unfolded. You would say that much which you found there, relating to the right conduct of life, you had already found scattered through the books of the Greek and Roman moralists. You would be startled by no strange or appalling truth. You would turn over their leaves in vain in search of such dark and puzzling ingenuities as try the wits of those who resort to the pages of the Timæus. A child can understand the essential truths of Christ. And the value of Christianity consists not in this, that it puts forth a new, ingenious, and intricate system of philosophy, but that it adds to recognised and familiar truths divine authority. Some things are indeed new; and much is new, if that may be called so, which, having been neglected as insignificant by other teachers, has by Christ been singled out and announced as primal and essential. But the peculiarity of Christianity lies in this, that its voice, whether heard in republishing

world and the new brotherhood of Christians. In becoming acquainted with the true history of the Christians of this period, we become conversant with men, who, whatever might be their mistakes or failings, or the vices of some of their number, present a wholly different character from that of the multitudes around them. We discern the high qualities and powers of our nature unfolding. A history that should fairly represent the age, a history, in consequence, unlike that of Gibbon in almost every feature, would constitute one of the most powerful arguments for the divine origin of our religion; for it would show the impossibility of its having had its source in those causes, which had been and were operating upon the condition of men everywhere, without the sphere of its influence.

We have been led into these remarks, because in the volumes before us the contrast between Christianity and paganism is beautifully exhibited. Though never obtrusively brought forward, it runs through the work and constitutes one of its principal charms. Of this no quotations which our limits admit would afford a fair specimen; and we shall give but a single extract from a very interesting conversation. In the course of the story we are introduced to an individual in extreme old age, a hermit, who, having been a preacher of our religion, had now, that his strength failed him, retired from the world to die. He is visited by Piso, who writes the account, in company with Fausta and with Julia, the daughter of Zenobia. The old man is speaking.

"'Till age dried up the sources of my strength, I toiled night and day in all countries and climates, in the face of every danger, in the service of mankind. For it is by serving others, that the law of Christ is fulfilled. This disinterested labor for others constituted the greatness of Jesus Christ. This constitutes true greatness in his followers. I perceive that what I say falls upon your ear as a new and strange doctrine. But it is the doctrine of Christianity. It utterly condemns, therefore, a life of solitary devotion. It is a mischievous influence which is now spreading outward from the example of that Paul, who suffered so much under the persecution of the Emperor Decius, and who then, flying to the solitudes of the Egyptian Thebais, has there in the vigor of his days buried himself in a cave of the earth, that he may serve God by forsaking man. His maxim seems to be, "The farther from man, the nearer to God," — the reverse of the Christian maxim, "The nearer man, the nearer God." A disciple of Jesus has truly said; "He who loves not his brother



an old and familiar doctrine, or announcing a new one, is not the voice of man, but of God. It is a revelation. It is a word from the invisible, unapproachable Spirit of the universe. For this Socrates would have been willing to renounce all his wisdom. Is it not this which we need? We can theorize and conjecture without end, but cannot relieve ourselves of our doubts. They will assail every work of man. We wish to repose in a divine assurance. This we have in Christianity. It is a message from God. It puts an end to doubt and conjecture. Wise men of all ages have agreed in the belief of One God; but not being able to demonstrate his being and his unity, they have had no power to change the popular belief, which has ever tended to polytheism and idolatry. Christianity teaches this truth with the authority of God himself, and already has it become the faith of millions. Philosophers have long ago taught that the only safe and happy life is a virtuous life. Christianity repeats this great truth, and adds, that it is such a life alone that conducts to immortality. Philosophers have themselves believed in the doctrine of a future life, and have died hoping to live again; and it cannot be denied that mankind generally have entertained an obscure expectation of a renewed existence after death. The advantage of Christianity consists in this, that it assures us of the reality of a future existence, on the word and authority of God himself. Jesus Christ taught, that all men come forth from death, wearing a new spiritual body, and thereafter never die; and to confirm his teaching, he himself being slain, rose from the dead, and showed himself to his followers alive, and while they were yet looking upon him, ascended to some other and higher world. Surely, Roman, though Christianity announced nothing more than these great truths, yet seeing it puts them forth in the name, and with the authority of God, it is a vast accession to our knowledge.'" — Vol. I. pp. 163 – 166.

Our general estimate of the "Letters from Palmyra," appears in what we have already said. It is not a work of an ordinary character. It is the production of a thoughtful, able, imaginative, and above all, a pure and right-minded author, of clear thoughts and sound sense.

ART. VII. — *Résumé de l'Histoire des Pays-Bas* par FRÉDÉRIC, BARON DE REIFFENBERG. 2 tom. Bruxelles. 1827.

THE people of the United States are descended from various European families, among which, although the inhabitants of the British Islands be the predominant one, so as to have stamped their own impress on the institutions and language of the whole, yet other races, and especially the German and Dutch, are entitled to great consideration for their numbers, and respect for their individual character. We frequently have occasion to observe, that Americans are prone to look back too exclusively to their English ancestry, and to dwell on the history and antiquities of England, forgetful of the fact that we possess high and glorious recollections associated with others among the best of the nations of Europe. Should we not be proud to reckon, as progenitors of our people, the greatest and wisest of the Republics of modern Europe, equally as the greatest and wisest of the Monarchies of modern Europe? Holland, as well as England? to explore the old history, to revisit the land of each, in pious veneration of our forefathers, all honored and deserving honor, whether they came from Britain, or from the kindred shores of the Netherlands?

For ourselves, we profess that, English as we are in origin, and proud as we are of our fellowship of blood with the great and free minds of Britain, we have yet trod the soil of the Netherlands, and looked on the monuments of her days of liberty and prosperity, and studied the history of her great men, with a sense of exultation that their blood also is infused into the veins, and with it, as we trust, their better traits are perpetuated in the character of the people of the United States.

In the strength of such feelings, we laid before our readers, some short time since, an idea of the fortunes and vicissitudes of the once free cities of Flanders;* and we proceed now to give a brief account of the ancient history of the Netherlands.

Men are accustomed to think and speak of the Netherlands, as they do of Italy and Germany, in the aggregate, and as one country; but the regions, which we commonly designate by that appellation, have been united together under a single gov-

* See the North American Review, Vol. XXXIX. pp. 112 et seq.

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# ADDITIONAL NOTICES OF MR. BUCKMINSTER,

## BY ANDREWS NORTON.

In revising the following notices of Mr. Buckminster for the present publication, it is a gratification to me to find that the impressions of his character, which I had received, as one younger than himself, and expressed under the influence of strong feeling, are confirmed by the reflections and the sober judgment of the twenty-six years that have intervened since their publication. During that interval I have often thought, and I know that others have thought too, how much good he might have done, and how much evil might have been prevented, if He, who orders all things in infinite wisdom, had seen fit to continue his life. At a period so distant from that in which I wrote these notices, the sense of his loss comes back upon me as if it were a recent event.

The first of them is the conclusion of an article in the "General Repository and Review," written almost immediately after his death; the other appeared in the following number of that work.

A. N.

*Cambridge, 25 October*, 1838.

We have been speaking of the friends of what we consider as rational Christianity, of their hopes and exertions; but we cannot speak of them without being reminded of an event awful and desolating, — of the loss of a man whose loss is irreparable. They will no more be encouraged by his example, or strengthened by his assistance, or animated by his friendship. In the wisdom of God's provi-

The charm of his public discourses was the powerful support given by his vigorous mind to those truths which we most desire to see established, and the vivid and beautiful expression of sentiments and feelings in harmony with all that is estimable in our nature. He had acquired an influence of the most beneficial kind, an influence in support of religion and good morals, such as, perhaps, so young a man never before possessed in our country. But all this has past away. In our hopes for the happiness of our fellow-creatures we shall no more know of his sympathy. Our exertions, whatever they may be, will continually remind us of how much more might have been effected, if he had been permitted to remain with us. We hope that this remembrance will not spend itself in unavailing regrets; but that each one of those who loved him, and whose wishes and objects were similar to his own, may contribute some portion of increased exertion toward supplying his loss, and may devote himself with more earnestness to that religion which only is capable of forming such a character.

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## CHARACTER OF MR. BUCKMINSTER.

It may be useful to endeavor to embody the recollections which I have yet fresh and vivid of the character of Mr. Buckminster. I have seen him in different situations; I was, I may hope, in some degree honored with his friendship. It may be useful to recall to those who knew him the memory of what he was, and to give some

impression of it to those who knew him not. The life of such a man ought not to and will not pass away, leaving only a momentary track of glory behind. In one respect what I have undertaken will be an easy task. There is nothing concerning his life or character, which must not be told; there is nothing which the feelings of friendship, or a regard to the interests of virtue, might make one wish to conceal. In other respects it will be sufficiently difficult. It would be hard indeed to speak of Mr. Buckminster as he would have spoken of one equally loved and valued with himself.

There is no question that he was one of the most eminent men whom our country has produced. In my opinion he was, beyond all rivalship, the most eminent literary man of all those of whom she retains only the memory. Yet I say this of one who was not a private and retired scholar; but who, during the last seven years of his short life, (he died in his twenty-eighth year,) was occupied in all the many and laborious duties of a clergyman in our metropolis; was accessible to the claims which it may easily be thought that friends, and acquaintance, and strangers made upon the society of such a man; and was, during this whole period, broken in upon by the repeated attacks of that disease which finally put an end to a life whose usefulness it had hardly been able to interrupt. His situation and circumstances forbade him that laborious diligence which too often busies itself about difficult and useless trifles; but his mind was always vigilant and active, and quick to seize on any new thoughts, and to perceive their bearing and connexion. No man better estimated the importance of different objects of attention, the value of different writers, or judged better what works were to be

examined, and what to be studied. He did not labor to acquire learning merely for the sake of exhibiting it to the wonder of others, but his studies were all for profit and usefulness. In the time which was left him by his many interruptions, he had acquired such a variety of knowledge that one could hardly converse with him on any subject connected with his profession, or with the branches of elegant literature, without having some new ideas suggested, without receiving some information, or being, at least, directed how to obtain it. Of his learning, his library, formed by himself, — which, for the number of volumes it contained, (about three thousand,) was, perhaps, one of the most valuable ever collected, certainly the most valuable ever possessed by an individual in our country, — was of itself no inconsiderable proof. It was always open to the use of his friends, and of every literary man. He was the friend and patron of literature among us. There is no man, who knew him, no man of letters in our part of the country, who does not feel how much is lost in losing his judgment, the influence of his ardor and interest, and the hope of hearing his expressions of pleasure and praise.

His favorite study was the interpretation of the Scriptures. He was of that class of Christians, who, — while they think that the sanctions and duties of our religion, what it teaches and what it requires, may be made intelligible to the humblest mind, — yet, believe that much thought and much learning are necessary to understand correctly its early records. He was one of those who think that the Scriptures, both Jewish and Christian, are to be understood only through the same means of elucidation as are applied to all other writings of similar or great antiquity; and who consider that peculiar difficulties attend their study, from

the want of collateral sources of information, and from the consequent necessity of collecting chiefly from the sacred writings themselves a knowledge of those facts and circumstances by which they are to be illustrated, and of the language, or the dialect, in which they are written. He was acquainted with the best writers on the criticism and interpretation of the Scriptures, especially those who have appeared since a new and better era in these studies has commenced, and he was familiar with the most important results of their investigation. The attention to these studies, which is prevailing and increasing among us, is, in no small degree, to be attributed to his example and influence. He had been appointed to deliver the first course of lectures on the foundation, which has lately been established, for the promotion of the knowledge of the Scriptures, in our university. Now that we have leisure to recollect all that we have lost in his death, it cannot be forgotten with how much expectation and interest we looked forward to his fulfilling this appointment.

But, though no one is more sensible than I am of the loss which the literature and theological science of our country have sustained in the death of Mr. Buckminster; and, though all who knew him, and were engaged in the same pursuits with him, felt it, in its first shock, like the prostration and scattering of their hopes and expectations; yet, for myself, I think that his loss as a minister of religion is greater and more irremediable. Of his public discourses I do not fear speaking with exaggerated praise, for they were listened to with delight and improvement by the highest and the humblest minds. To listen to them was the indulgence and gratification of our best affections. It was to follow in the triumph of religion and virtue. It was to be

present while those truths were advancing in all their force, which we most desire to see established, and those sentiments making a conquest of our own and every heart, which we most desire to feel and see prevailing. No one, who has ever heard him, has forgotten the interest of his manner, or can ever forget that he has gazed on the illumination of his countenance. The power of his talents is by no means to be estimated by the extent of his reputation. Our literary men are few, and distant from the rest of the world, and incapable of asserting for any object of their admiration the praise to which he is justly entitled. If we may trust those, however, who are well able to judge, and if we may rely on the fairness of our own comparison of those sermons we have heard with those we have read, the eloquence of some of our preachers is not inferior to any that may now be found in that country which alone we can acknowledge as a rival, and not far below what any country has ever produced. And he, of whom I speak, was, beyond all question, to be placed in the first rank of those by whom we have been best instructed in truth and most animated in virtue.

He considered Christianity as a revelation of our connexion with God, of our immortality, and of the sanctions of our duty. He viewed it as the proper foundation of all our prospects of happiness and all our principles of conduct. He did not regard religion as anything to be addressed to men's minds for the purpose of producing a temporary excitement of fervor or terror, but as what ought to be the animating principle of all our affections and all our conduct, giving life, and health, and vigor to the whole moral system. It was his object, therefore, to bring the lives of his hearers into habitual subjection to the ani-

mating and awful motives of Christianity, to connect them with those actions which we are all of us called upon to perform, and to show how they ought to regulate us in those relations in which we are placed to God and our fellow-creatures. The particular purpose of some of his discourses was to enforce the evidences of our religion, especially those arising from its internal excellence, and the character of its founder and its first preachers. One of his sermons on the character of our Savior, and some others on those of his apostles, are yet vivid in the recollection of many of us. We shall not readily forget the impression which he gave us of their characters, and, if I may be allowed to add it, the impression which he gave us of his own. In these and other discourses he fulfilled that very important duty of a clergyman, one of those for which he is particularly set apart, the explanation of the Scriptures. He had, as has been said, in no common degree, the learning requisite for this purpose, and he knew how to accommodate this learning to popular use, and to render it intelligible to such as were not familiar with theological studies. Some, at least, of those who heard him, will, probably, through life, read the Scriptures with other views than they would else have done, and with far more intelligence and satisfaction.

The great influence, which he acquired, and the great good, which he effected as a clergyman, could have been acquired and effected only by one who united his talents and his virtues. As respects that class of the community who are somewhat above the common rank, the extent of his loss cannot be estimated. By such men, a preacher of even equal genius and eloquence with Mr. Buckminster, but without the sincerity of his faith, the warmth of his

piety, and the irreproachable integrity of his life, against which no enmity ever whispered a suspicion, might be listened to, indeed, but only as a transient entertainment; and by such men, a preacher of even equal virtue and piety, but without his commanding strength of intellect, his correct views of religion, and his knowledge of human nature and the proper modes of address, might be heard only with patience. But no man could pretend to look down on the intellectual powers of Mr. Buckminster. No man, from any confidence in his own superior discernment, could pretend to regard with disrespect what he reverenced, or to think lightly of what he made the rule of his life and the foundation of his hopes.

If I were to mention any virtues as peculiarly characteristic of Mr. Buckminster, one would be that manliness of mind, which no applause broke down into any displays of vanity or affectation, which made no sacrifices of honesty or of propriety to acquire any man's favor, and which impressed all, who knew him, with unconstrained respect. Another would be his forgetfulness of self; so that by the frequent attacks of an alarming disease he was never subdued into complaint or despondence. He could not but have looked forward with some of those apprehensions which all, who knew him, felt; but they did not interrupt his exertions, or destroy his cheerfulness, or diminish his interest in the welfare of his friends, and of all whom he had the power to benefit.

I have said that he was not insensible to the prospect that he had but a short time to do good to his fellowmen. Few of those, who heard him on the day of the interment of Mr. Emerson, which took place but about a year before he himself was carried to the grave, have for-

gotten the prophetic foreboding which escaped him of his own death. That day was rendered yet more gloomy by our witnessing in him the symptoms of disease, and by a sense of the personal feeling, with which he must have quoted the words of the Poet, in speaking of his departed brother: —

> "O! 'tis well
> With him. But who knows what the coming hour,
> Veil'd in thick darkness, brings for *us!*"

There are those who, with myself, can recollect, as if he were yet living, his countenance, his manner, the tones of his voice, his accents of welcome, and his smile of benevolence. There are others, as well as myself, in whom the association is not yet broken, that connected the thought of him with every plan for the promotion of religion or literature, and which led them at once to dwell on what would be his exertions and interest in its promotion, and his pleasure in its success. It is well for our virtue to preserve the memory of the friends we have lost. There is something of brute insensibility in suffering it lightly to pass away. It connects itself with and strengthens all our better feelings and resolutions. It delivers us from that debasement which is produced by being continually occupied with present objects. It carries us back to the past, when we knew them, and directs our view to the future, when we shall meet them again; and no man can be other than virtuous who often reviews what has been, and often anticipates what is approaching. The thought of those whom we have lost gives us new interest in everything which we remember them to have approved, in every good purpose in which they were engaged together with us, and in every virtue and excellence which their friendship promoted;

and it leads our attention to that world where they now exist, and from which we are parted by so thin a separation. With the objects of that world a feeling of reality is connected, when we believe that those exist there whom we have known and loved. There, if we live so as to deserve it, we shall again be with them; and he, who in life has suffered the pain of separation from but a few such men as Mr. Buckminster, may, when his life shall end, have more and dearer friends to meet than those he leaves behind.

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I have wished to preserve the two following testimonies of respect to the memory of Mr. Buckminster, which are, perhaps, less known than some others. If, beside this reason, any private feeling of regard or esteem have induced me to their selection, it is not necessary to offer it as an excuse. The first is from the valedictory oration, delivered at the last commencement of our university, by Mr. Charles Eliot, a member of the class who then commenced Masters of Arts. The mention of Mr. Buckminster, and an allusion to the late Dr. Eckley and Mr. Emerson, were introduced in an address to the governor of the commonwealth, and the overseers of the college, of whose body they were members.

"Tibi, [gubernatori,] et sociis, et curatoribus, bene florentis ævi litterarum sit gaudium. Vos doctrinæ hujusce sedis et conservatores et Mæcenates estote. Sed, dum vos aspicio, non sedes vacatas morte lugebo? Simeon non est, — Josephus mortuus est, — et *Benjamin* quoque eripitur. Heu, magna lux nostra abest! Ille abest, qui quondam nec temere nec timide in omni pro litteris aut religione

inter primos incessit! Certe manent, qui bona et grandia volunt agere et agent; sed ubi est alter Buckminster? Gloria nobis fuit! Ingens inter nos emicuit! Nobis manent desiderium, et memoria, et exemplum ejus; et restat etiam, ut, cum ille ereptus est, amicitiâ et consiliis arctius conjungeremur, et, pro viribus nostris, omnium bonorum damnum omnes supplere conaremur."

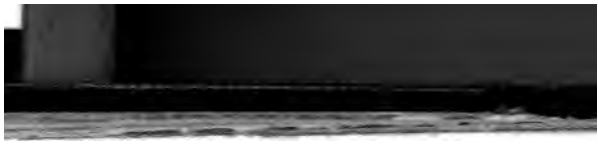
The other passage, which I shall give, is from a discourse of the Rev. Mr. Colman, before the "Humane Society of Massachusetts." It was delivered on the day of Mr. Buckminster's death. Mr. Colman had arrived in Boston without hearing of his illness, and was about to visit him, when he was met with the news that he was dying.

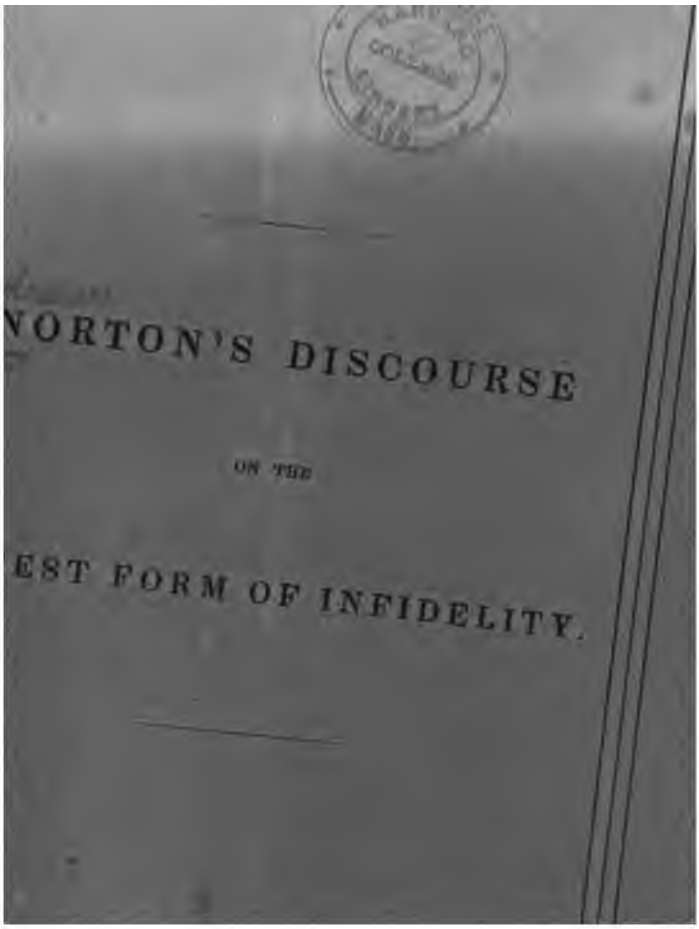
In the following extract he is addressing the members of the society: —

"The time is fast hastening, when death, from which we are so kindly solicitous to save others, shall seize upon us. This day, nay, this hour, witnesses his awful ravages. This day has he robbed us of a beloved friend and brother; a highly valued, a highly respected officer of your institution; an important and powerful auxiliary to the cause of humanity and religion. The tongue of the eloquent is mute. The eye, which beamed with celestial benignity, is sealed. And the flame of genius, of learning, and of piety, that has blazed so splendidly among us, has left the earth, to mingle with those lights which adorn with immortal brightness the heavenly regions. How interesting and glorious is the path by which the righteous ascend to God!"

# SERMONS.

## FIRST SELECTION.





NORTON'S DISCOURSE

ON THE

EST FORM OF INFIDELITY.



# DISCOURSE

ON THE

# TEST FORM OF INFIDELITY;

DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF THE ALUMNI OF THE CAMBRIDGE

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL,"

ON THE 19TH OF JULY, 1839.

---

WITH NOTES.

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By ANDREWS NORTON.



(76.16.1509.)

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1839, by ANDREWS NORTON, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

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# DISCOURSE.

I ADDRESS you, Gentlemen, and our friends who are assembled with us, on an occasion of more than common interest; as it is your first meeting since joining together in a society as former pupils of the Theological School in this place. Many of you may look back over a considerable portion of time that has elapsed since your residence here. In thus meeting with those in whose society we have spent some of the earlier years of life, recollections are naturally called up of pleasures that are gone, of ties that have been broken, of hopes that have perished, and of bright imaginations that have faded away. Such recollections produce those serious views of our present existence with which religious sentiment is connected. They make us feel the value of a Christian's faith; of that faith, which, where





decay was before written on all most dear to us, stamps immortality instead.

I see among you many, who, I know, will recall our former connexion with the same interest as I do, and whom I am privileged to regard as friends. As for those of you, Gentlemen, to whom I have not stood in the relation of an instructer, we also have an intimate connexion with each other. Your office is to defend, explain, and enforce the truths of Christianity ; and with the importance of those truths no one can be more deeply impressed than myself. So far as you are faithful to your duty, the strong sympathy of all good men is with you.

But we meet in a revolutionary and uncertain state of religious opinion, existing throughout what is called the Christian world. Our religion is very imperfectly understood, and received by comparatively a small number with intelligent faith. In proportion as our view is more extended, and we are better acquainted with what is and what has been, we shall become more sensible of the great changes that have long been in preparation, but which of late have been rapidly developed. The present state of things imposes new responsibilities upon all, who know the value of our faith

and have ability to maintain it. Let us then employ this occasion in considering some of the characteristics of the times and some of those opinions now prevalent, which are at war with a belief in Christianity.

By a belief in Christianity, we mean the belief that Christianity is a revelation by God of the truths of religion; and that the divine authority of him whom God commissioned to speak to us in his name was attested, in the only mode in which it could be, by miraculous displays of his power. Religious truths are those truths, and those alone, which concern the relations of man to God and eternity. It is only as an immortal being and a creature of God, that man is capable of religion. Now those truths which concern our higher nature, and all that can with reason deeply interest us in our existence, we Christians receive, as we trust, on the testimony of God. He who rejects Christianity must admit them, if he admit them at all, upon some other evidence.

But the fundamental truths of religion taught by Christianity became very early connected with human speculations, to which the same importance was gradually attached, and for the proof of which the same divine authority was claimed. These speculations spread out and





consolidated into systems of theology, presenting aspects equally hostile to reason and to our faith; so hostile, that, for many centuries, a true Christian in belief and heart, earnest to communicate to others the blessings of his faith, would have experienced, anywhere in Christendom, a fate similar to that which his Master suffered among the Jews. It would be taking a different subject from what I have proposed, to attempt to explain and trace the causes of this monstrous phenomenon. The false representations of Christianity, that have come down to us from less enlightened times, have ceased to retain their power over far the larger portion of those individuals who form, for good or evil, the character of the age in which they live. But the reaction of the human intellect and heart against their imposition has as yet had but little tendency to procure the reception of more correct notions of Christianity. On the contrary, the inveterate and enormous errors, that have prevailed, have so perverted men's conceptions, have so obscured and perplexed the whole subject, have so stood in the way of all correct knowledge of facts, and all just reasoning; there are so few works in Christian theology not at least colored and tainted by them; and they still

present such obstacles at every step to a rational investigation of the truth; that the degree of learning, reflection, judgment, freedom from worldly influences, and independence of thought, necessary to ascertain for one's self the true character of Christianity, is to be expected from but few. The greater number, consequently, confound the systems that have been substituted for it with Christianity itself, and receive them in its stead, or, in rejecting them, reject our faith. The tendency of the age is to the latter result.

This tendency is strengthened by the political action of the times, especially in the Old World. Ancient institutions and traditionary power are there struggling to maintain themselves against the vast amount of new energy that has been brought into action. Long-existing forms of society are giving way. The old prejudices by which they were propped up are decaying. Wise men look with awe at the spectacle; as if they saw in some vast tower, hanging over a populous city, rents opening, and its sides crumbling and inclining. But in the contest between the new and the old, which has spread over Europe, erroneous representations of Christianity are in alliance with established power. They have long been





so. The institutions connected with them have long been principal sources of rank and emolument. What passes for Christianity is thus placed in opposition to the demands of the mass of men, and is regarded by them as inimical to their rights; while, on the other hand, those, to whom false Christianity affords aid, repel all examination into the genuineness of its claims.

The commotion of men's minds in the rest of the civilized world, produces a sympathetic action in our own country. We have indeed but little to guard us against the influence of the depraving literature and noxious speculations which flow in among us from Europe. We have not yet any considerable body of intellectual men, devoted to the higher departments of thought, and capable of informing and guiding others in attaining the truth. There is no controlling power of intellect among us.

Christianity, then, has been grossly misrepresented, is very imperfectly understood, and powerful causes are in operation to obstruct all correct knowledge of it, and to withdraw men's thoughts and affections from it. But at the present day there is little of that avowed and zealous infidelity, the infidelity of highly popular authors, acknowledged enemies of our

faith, which characterized the latter half of the last century. Their writings, often disfigured by gross immoralities, are now falling into disrepute. But the effects of those writings, and of the deeply seated causes by which they were produced, are still widely diffused. There is now no bitter warfare against Christianity, because such men as then waged it would now consider our religion as but a name, a pretence, the obsolete religion of the state, the superstition of the vulgar. But infidelity has but assumed another form, and in Europe, and especially in Germany, has made its way among a very large portion of nominally Christian theologians. Among them are now to be found those whose writings are most hostile to all that characterizes our faith. Christianity is undermined by them with the pretence of settling its foundations anew. Phantoms are substituted for the realities of revelation.

It is asserted, apparently on good authority, that the celebrated atheist Spinoza composed the work in which his opinions are most fully unfolded, in the Dutch language, and committed it to his friend, the physician Mayer, to translate into Latin; that, where the name *God* now appears, Spinoza had written *Nature;* but that Mayer induced him to substitute the

former word for the latter, in order partially to screen himself from the odium to which he might be exposed.* Whether this anecdote be true or not, a similar abuse of language appears in many of the works to which I refer. The holiest names are there; a superficial or ignorant reader may be imposed upon by their occurrence; but they are there as words of show, devoid of their essential meaning, and perverted to express some formless and powerless conception. In Germany the theology of which I speak has allied itself with atheism, with pantheism, and with the other irreligious speculations, that have appeared in those metaphysical systems from which the God of Christianity is excluded.

There is no subject of historical inquiry of more interest than the history of opinions; there is none of more immediate concern than the state of opinions; for opinions govern the world. Except in cases of strong temptation, men's evil passions must coincide with or must pervert their opinions, before they can obtain the mastery. It is, therefore, not a light question, what men think of Christianity. It is a question on which, in the judgment of an intel-

* See Le Clerc's "Bibliothèque Ancienne et Moderne;" Tom. xv. p. 433; Tom. xxii. p. 135.

ligent believer, the condition of the civilized world depends. With these views we will consider the aspect that infidelity has taken in our times.

The latest form of infidelity is distinguished by assuming the Christian name, while it strikes directly at the root of faith in Christianity, and indirectly of all religion, by denying the miracles attesting the divine mission of Christ. The first writer, so far as I know, who maintained the impossibility of a miracle was Spinoza, whose argument, disengaged from the use of language foreign from his opinions, is simply this, that the laws of nature are the laws by which God is bound, Nature and God being the same, and therefore laws from which Nature or God can never depart.* The argument is founded on atheism. The denial of the possibility of miracles must involve the denial of the existence of God; since, if there be a God, in the proper sense of the word, there can be no room for doubt, that he may act in a manner different from that in which he displays his power in the ordinary operations of nature. It deserves notice, however, that in Spinoza's discussion of this subject we find that affectation of religious language, and of religious

* See his "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus," particularly Cap. VI.

reverence and concern, which is so striking a characteristic of many of the irreligious speculations of our day, and of which he, perhaps, furnished the prototype; for he has been regarded as a profound teacher, a patriarch of truth, by some of the most noted among the infidel philosophers and theologians of Germany. "I will show from Scripture," he says, "that the decrees and commands of God, and consequently his providence, are nothing but the order of nature." — "If any thing should take place in nature which does not follow from its laws, *that* would necessarily be repugnant to the order which God has established in nature by its universal laws, and, therefore, contrary to nature and its laws; and consequently the belief of such an event would cause universal doubt and lead to atheism."* So strong a hold has religion upon the inmost nature of man, that even its enemies, in order to delude their followers, thus assume its aspect and mock its tones.

What has been stated is the great argument of Spinoza, to which every thing in his discussion of the subject refers; but this discussion may appear like the text-book of much that has been written in modern times con-

* Ibid., Cap. VI.

cerning it. There is one, however, among the writings against the miracles of Christianity, of a different kind, the famous Essay of Hume. None has drawn more attention, or has more served as a groundwork for infidelity. Yet, considering the sagacity of the author, and the celebrity of his work, it is remarkable, that, in his main argument, the whole point to be proved is broadly assumed in the premises. "It is a miracle," he says, "that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed, in any age or country. There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event; otherwise the event would not merit that appellation." The conclusion, if conclusion it may be called, is easily made. If a miracle has never been observed in any age or country, if uniform experience shows that no miracle ever occurred, then it follows that all accounts of past miracles are undeserving of credit. But if there be an attempt to stretch this easy conclusion, and to represent it as involving the intrinsic incredibility of a miracle, the argument immediately gives way. "Experience," says Hume, "is our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact." Experience is the foundation of such reasoning, but we may draw inferences from our experi-





ence. We may conclude from it the existence of a power capable of works which we have never known it to perform; and no one, it may be presumed, who believes that there is a God, will say, that he is convinced by his experience, that God can manifest his power only in conformity to the laws which he has imposed upon nature.

Hume cannot be charged with affecting religion; but in the conclusion of his Essay, he says, in mockery; "I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends, or disguised enemies, to the Christian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on *faith*, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it, to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure." What Hume said in derision has been virtually repeated, apparently in earnest, by some of the modern disbelievers of miracles, who still choose to profess a belief in Christianity.

To deny that a miracle is capable of proof, or to deny that it may be proved by evidence of the same nature as establishes the truth of other events, is, in effect, as I have said, to

deny the existence of God. A miracle can be incapable of proof, only because it is physically or morally impossible; since what is possible may be proved. To deny that the truth of a miracle may be established, involves the denial of creation; for there can be no greater miracle than creation. It equally implies, that no species of being that propagates its kind ever had a commencement; for if there was a first plant that grew without seed, or a first man without parents, or if of any series of events there was a first without such antecedents as the laws of nature require, then there was a miracle. So far is a miracle from being incapable of proof, that you can escape from the necessity of believing innumerable miracles, only by believing that man, and all other animals, and all plants, have existed from eternity upon this earth, without commencement of propagation, there never having been a first of any species. No one, at the present day, will maintain with Lucretius, that they were generated from inanimate matter, by the fermentation of heat and moisture. Nothing can seem more simple or conclusive than the view we have taken; but we may render it more familiar by an appeal to fact. The science of geology has shown us, that man is but a late inhabitant of the earth.





The first individuals of our race, then, were not produced as all others have been. They were formed by a miracle, or, in other words, by an act of God's power, exerted in a different manner from that in which it operates according to the established laws of nature. Creation, the most conspicuous, is at the same time the most undeniable, of miracles.

By any one who admits that God exists, in the proper sense of the words, his power to effect a miracle cannot be doubted; and it would be the excess of human presumption and folly to affirm, that it would be inconsistent with his wisdom and goodness ever to exert his power except in those modes of action which he has prescribed to himself in what we call the laws of nature.

On the contrary, a religious philosopher may regard the uniformity of the manifestations of God's power in the course of nature, as solely intended by him to afford a stable ground for calculation and action to his rational creatures; which could not exist, if the antecedents that we call causes, were not, in all ordinary cases, the signs of consequent effects. This uniformity is necessary to enable created beings to be rational agents. The Deity has imposed upon himself no arbitrary and mechanical laws.

It is solely, so far as we can perceive, for the sake of his creatures, that he preserves the uniformity of action that exists in his works. Beyond the sphere of their observation, where this cause ceases, we have no ground for the belief of its continuance. There is nothing to warrant the opinion, that the Deity still restrains his power by an adherence to laws, the observance of which his creatures cannot recognise. We have strong reasons for believing that such an apparently causeless uniformity of operation would produce, not good, but evil. We have no ground for supposing, that the operation of the laws of nature, with which we are acquainted, extends beyond the ken of human observation; or that these laws are any thing more than a superficial manifestation of God's power, the mere exterior phenomena of the universe. We have no reason to doubt that the creation may be full of hidden miracles.

But, if the uniformity of the laws of nature, so far as they fall within our cognizance, is ordained by God for the good of his creatures, then, should a case occur in which a great blessing is to be bestowed upon them, the dispensing of which requires that he should act in other modes, no presumption would exist





against his so acting. So far as we are able to discern, there would be no reason to doubt that he would so act. A miracle is improbable, when we can perceive no sufficient cause in reference to his creatures, why the Deity should vary his modes of operation; it ceases to be so, when such a cause is assigned. But Christianity claims to reveal facts, a knowledge of which is essential to the moral and spiritual regeneration of men; and to offer, in attestation of the truth of those facts, the only satisfactory proof, the authority of God, evidenced by miraculous displays of his power. The supposed interposition of God corresponds to the weighty purpose which it is represented as effecting. If Christianity profess to teach truths of infinite moment; if we perceive, that such is the character of its teachings, if, indeed, they are true; and if we are satisfied, from the exercise of our own reason and the history of the world, that they relate to facts concerning our relations and destiny, of which we could otherwise obtain no assurance, then this character of our religion removes all presumption against its claims to a miraculous origin.

But incredulity respecting the miracles of Christianity rarely has its source in any process of reasoning. It is commonly produced by the

gross misrepresentations which have been made of Christianity. It has also another cause, deeply seated in our nature; — the inaptitude and reluctance of men to extend their view beyond the present and sensible, to raise themselves above the interests, the vexations, the pleasures, innocent or criminal, that lie within the horizon of a year or a week; and to open their minds to those thoughts and feelings, that rush in with the clear apprehension of the fact, that the barrier between the eternal and the finite world has been thrown open. A religious horror may come over us, so that

> "We fain would skulk beneath our wonted covering,
> Mean as it is."

Man, indeed, in his low estate, loves the supernatural; but it is the supernatural addressed to the imagination, not in all its naked distinctness to the soul; it is the supernatural as belonging to some form of faith more connected with this world than the future; or regarded as the operation of limited beings, presenting a semblance of human nature, on whom man can react in his turn. But let us imagine, if we can, what would be the feelings of an enlightened philosopher, were he to witness an unquestionable miracle, a work breaking through the secondary agency, behind which the Deity





ordinarily veils himself, and bringing us into immediate connexion with him. We can hardly conceive of the awe, the almost appalling feeling, with which it would be contemplated by one fully capable of comprehending its character, and alive to all its relations. The miracles of Christianity, when they are brought home to the mind as realities, have somewhat of the same power; dimmed as they are by distance, and clouded over by all the errors that false Christianity has gathered round them. If they be true, if Christianity be true, if its doctrines be certain; it is the most solemn fact we can comprehend, as well as the most joyful. It requires, that our whole character should be conformed to the new relations which it makes known. All things around us change their aspect. Life and death are not what they were. We are walking on the confines of an unknown and eternal world, where none of those earthly passions, that now agitate men so strongly, can find entrance. They bear upon them the mark of their doom, soon to perish. But from the revulsion of feeling, that must take place, when the character of all that surrounds us is thus changed, and the objects of eternity appear before the mind's eye, it is natural that many should shrink, and endeavour to

escape from the view, and to forget it amid the familiar things of life; clinging to a vain conception, vain as regards each individual, of an unchanging stability in the order of nature.

Vain, I say, as regards each individual. Whatever we may fancy respecting the unchangeableness of the present order of things, to us it is not permanent. If we are to exist as individuals after death, then we shall soon be called, not to witness, but to be the subjects, of a miracle of unspeakable interest to us. Death will be to us an incontrovertible miracle. For us the present order of things will cease, and the unseen world, from which we may have held back our imagination, our feelings, and our belief, will be around us in all its reality.

If it were not for the abuse of language that has prevailed, it would be idle to say, that, in denying the miracles of Christianity, the truth of Christianity is denied. It has been vaguely alleged, that the internal evidences of our religion are sufficient, and that miraculous proof is not wanted; but this can be said by no one who understands what Christianity is, and what its internal evidences are. On this ground, however, the miracles of Christ were not indeed expressly denied, but were represented by some of the founders of the modern school





of German infidelity, as only prodigies, adapted to rouse the attention of a rude people, like the Jews; but not required for the conviction of men of more enlightened minds. By others, the accounts of them in the Gospels have been admitted as in the main true, but explained as only exaggerated and discolored relations of natural events. But now, without taking the trouble to go through this tedious and hopeless process of misinterpretation, there are many who avow their disbelief of all that is miraculous in Christianity, and still affect to call themselves Christians. But Christianity was a revelation from God; and, in being so, it was itself a miracle. Christ was commissioned by God to speak to us in his name; and this is a miracle. No proof of his divine commission could be afforded, but through miraculous displays of God's power. Nothing is left that can be called Christianity, if its miraculous character be denied. Its essence is gone; its evidence is annihilated. Its truths, involving the highest interests of man, the facts which it makes known, and which are implied in its very existence as a divine revelation, rest no longer on the authority of God. All the evidence, if evidence it can be called, which it affords of its doctrines, consists in the real or

pretended assertions of an individual, of whom we know very little, except that his history must have been most grossly misrepresented.

It is indeed difficult to conjecture what any one can fancy himself to believe of the history of Christ, who rejects the belief of his divine commission and miraculous powers. What conception can such a one form of his character? His whole history, as recorded in the Gospels, is miraculous. It is vain to attempt to strike out what relates directly or indirectly to his miraculous authority and works, with the expectation that any thing consistent or coherent will remain. It is as if one were to undertake to cut out from a precious agate the figure which nature has inwrought, and to pretend, that, by the removal of this accidental blemish, the stone might be left in its original orm. If the accounts of Christ's miracles are mere fictions, then no credit can be due to works so fabulous as the pretended histories of his life. But these supposed miracles, it has been contended, may be explained, consistently with the veracity of the reporters, as natural events, the character of which was mistaken by the beholders. At first glance it is obvious, that such a statement supposes mistakes committed by those beholders, the disci-





ples and apostles of Jesus, hardly consistent with any exercise of intellect; and, at the same time, renders it very difficult to free his character from the suspicion of intentional fraud. A little further consideration may satisfy us, that, if Jesus really performed no miracles, the accounts of his life, that have been handed down from his disciples, give evidence of utter folly, or the grossest deception, or rather of both.

But let us suppose, that the account of some one or more of the miracles of Christ, especially if detached from its connexion, and from all that determines its meaning, admits of being explained as having its origin in some natural event. Take any case one will, however, it must be admitted, that the explanation is not obvious, that it is conjectural; and, in a great majority of cases, it must be allowed, that it is merely possible; and that, to render it deserving of notice, the principle is to be assumed, that whatever is supernatural must be expunged from his history. We will suppose ourselves, then, to have tried this mode of interpretation on one narrative, and to have found it improbable. But, suspending our opinion, let us pass on to another solution of a similar character. A new improbability arises, and after

that a new one. These improbabilities consequently multiply upon us in a geometrical ratio, and very soon become altogether overwhelming. Yet I speak not of what may be done, but of what has been done. This process of misinterpretation has been laboriously pursued through the Gospels; * and the result has been a mass of monstrous conjectures, and abortive solutions, on which, as we proceed, there falls no glimmering of probability; and which continually shock and grate against all our most cherished sentiments of the inestimable value of Christianity, of admiration and love for its Founder on earth, and of reverence for its divine Author.

The proposition, that the history of Jesus is miraculous throughout, is to be understood in all its comprehensiveness. It is not merely that his history is full of accounts of his miracles; it is, that every thing in his history, what relates to himself and what relates to others, is conformed to this fact, and to the conception of him as speaking with authority from God. This is what constitutes the internal evidence of Christianity, a term, as I have said, often

* See for example Paulus's "Commentary on the Gospels"; and his "Life of Jesus."





used of late with a very indistinct notion of any meaning attached to it. The consistency in the representations given by the different evangelists of the actions and words of Christ, as a messenger from God to men; their consistency in the representation of a character which it is impossible they should have conceived of, if it had not been exhibited before them, gives us an assurance of their truth, that becomes clearer in proportion as their writings are more studied and better understood; and in connexion with this is the consistency of their whole narrative; the coherence and naturalness with which all the words and actions of others bear upon events and upon a character so marvellous, and imply their existence.

The words of Christ, equally with his miracles, imply his mission from God. They are accordant only with the conception of him as speaking with authority from God. They would be altogether unsuitable to a merely human teacher of religious truth. So considered, if not the language of an impostor, they become the language of the most daring and crazy fanaticism. I speak of the general character of his discourses, a character of the most striking peculiarity. In ascribing them to one not miraculously commissioned by God, they

must be utterly changed and degraded. What is most solemn and sublime must either be rejected as never having been spoken by him, or its meaning must be thoroughly perverted; it must be diluted into folly, that it may not be blasphemy.

"I am the good shepherd," said Jesus, "and lay down my life for my sheep." "For this, the Father loves me; for I lay down my life, to receive it again. None takes it from me; but I lay it down of my own accord. I have a commission to lay it down, and I have a commission to receive it again. This charge I received from my Father." There are but two aspects under which such words can be regarded, if you suppose it true that they were uttered by Jesus. You must say, in effect, with the unbelieving Jews who heard him, "He is possessed by a demon and is mad. Why listen to him?" Or the view which we take must be essentially that of others who were present; "Can a demoniac open the eyes of the blind?"

Let us look at another passage. To a Christian it appears of unspeakable grandeur and of infinite moment. It presents before him the Founder of his religion as contemplating the immeasurable extent of blessings of which God had made him the minister, as announcing man's





immortality amid the sufferings of humanity, on the threshold of the tomb.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who has faith in me, though he die, shall live; and he who lives as a believer in me shall never die. Hast thou faith in this?"

Let us go on to the sepulchre of Lazarus.

"I thank thee, Father, that thou hast heard me; and I know that thou hearest me always; but I have thus spoken, for the sake of the multitude who are standing round, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."

We must, then, believe that Jesus Christ was sent by God, commissioned to speak to us in his name; or we cannot reasonably pretend to know any thing concerning him. We may think it probable, that he was a reformer of the religion of his nation, who preached for some short time, principally in Galilee; but, having very soon made himself an object of general odium, was put to death as a malefactor amid the execrations of his countrymen, who then strove, though ineffectually, to suppress his followers. Or, we may fancy him an untaught but enlightened philosopher, whose character, words and deeds, whatever they were, have been absurdly and fraudulently misrepresented by his disciples. Or, as the Gospels cannot be

regarded as true histories, we may go on to the conclusion at which infidelity, in its folly and ignorance, arrived within the memory of some of us, that no such individual existed, and that Christ is but an allegorical personage. But to whatever conclusion we may come, if the representation of him in the Gospels be not conformed to his real character and office, no foundation is left, on which any one can with reason pretend to regard him as an object of veneration, or to consider his teachings, whatever effect they may have had upon the world, as of any importance to himself.

To an infidel, whether he openly profess himself to be so, or whether he call himself a Christian, the history in the Gospels must present an insolvable problem. In the former case, he may turn from it, and say that he is not called upon to solve it; but in the latter, he is, by his profession, bound to do so. He has taken upon himself the task of explaining away the history as it stands, and substituting another in its stead; and of so fabricating the new history, that it may afford him ground for professing admiration and love for the real character of Christ.*

* See Note I. at the end of the Discourse, for "Some further Remarks on the Characteristics of the Modern German School of Infidelity."





THE rejection of Christianity, in any proper sense of the word, the denial that God revealed himself by Christ, the denial of the truth of the Gospel history, or, as it is called in the language of the sect, the rejection of *historical* Christianity, is, of course, accompanied by the rejection of all that mass of evidence, which, in the view of a Christian, establishes the truth of his religion. This evidence, it is said, consists only of probabilities. We want certainty. The dwellers in the region of shadows complain, that the solid earth is not stable enough for them to rest on. They have firm footing on the clouds.

To the demand for certainty, let it come from whom it may, I answer, that I know of no absolute certainty, beyond the limit of momentary consciousness, a certainty that vanishes the instant it exists, and is lost in the region of metaphysical doubt. Beyond this limit, absolute certainty, so far as human reason may judge, cannot be the privilege of any finite being. When we talk of certainty, a wise man will remember what he is, and the narrow bounds of his wisdom and of his powers. A few years ago he was not. A few years ago he was an infant in his mother's arms, and could but express his wants, and move himself, and smile and cry. He has been introduced into a

boundless universe, boundless to human thought in extent and past duration. An eternity had preceded his existence. Whence came the minute particle of life that he now enjoys? Why is he here? Is he only with other beings like himself, that are continually rising up and sinking in the shoreless ocean of existence; or is there a Creator, Father, and Disposer of all? Is he to continue a conscious being after this life, and undergo new changes; or is death, which he sees everywhere around him, to be the real, as it is the apparent end of what would then seem to be a purposeless and incomprehensible existence? He feels happiness and misery; and would understand how he may avoid the one and secure the other. He is restlessly urged on in pursuit of one object after another; many of them hurtful; most of them such, as the changes of life, or possession itself, or disease, or age, will deprive of their power of gratifying; while, at the same time, if he be unenlightened by revelation, the darkness of the future is rapidly closing round him. What objects should he pursue? How, if that be possible, is happiness to be secured? A creature of a day, just endued with the capacity of thought, at first receiving all his opinions from those who have preceded him, entangled among

numberless prejudices, confused by his passions, perceiving, if the eyes of his understanding are opened, that the sphere of his knowledge is hemmed in by an infinity of which he is ignorant, from which unknown region, clouds are often passing over, and darkening what seemed clearest to his view, — such a being cannot pretend to attain, by his unassisted powers, any assurance concerning the unseen and the eternal, the great objects of religion. If men had been capable of comprehending their weakness and ignorance, and of reflecting deeply on their condition here, a universal cry would have risen from their hearts, imploring their God, if there were one, to reveal himself, and to make known to them their destiny. Their wants have been answered by God before they were uttered. Such is the belief of a Christian; and there is no question more worthy of consideration than whether this belief be well founded. It can be determined only by the exercise of that reason which God has given us for our guidance in all that concerns us. There can be no intuition, no direct perception, of the truth of Christianity, no metaphysical certainty. But it would be folly, indeed, to reject the testimony of God concerning all our higher relations and interests, because we can have no assurance, that he has

spoken through Christ, except such as the condition of our nature admits of.

It is important for us to understand, that, in all things of practical import, in the exercise of all our affections, in the whole formation of our characters, we are acting, and must act, on probabilities alone. Certainty, in the metaphysical sense of the word, has nothing to do with the concerns of men, as respects this life or the future. We must discuss the subject of religion as we do all other subjects, when men talk with men about matters in which they are in earnest. It would be considered rather as insanity, than folly, were any one to introduce metaphysical skepticism, concerning causality, or identity, or the existence of the external world, or the foundation of human knowledge, into a discussion concerning the affairs of this life, the establishment of a manufactory, for example, or the building of a railroad; or if he should bring it forward to shake our confidence in the facts, of which human testimony and our own experience assure us; or to invalidate the conclusions, so far as they relate to this world, which we found on those facts. But we must use the same faculties, and adopt the same rules, in judging concerning the facts of the world which we have not seen, as concerning those of the

world of which we have seen a very little. If it can be shown, according to the common and established principles of reasoning among men, that Christianity is true; if it can be shown, that, to suppose it not true, is to suppose a moral impossibility, we need no further evidence. When we have arrived at this conclusion, our ears will be opened to the accordant voice from the earth and from the skies, which bears testimony to a beneficent Creator. We shall find in the immortality assured to us by Christianity, a solution of the problem of our present life; a solution, which the very existence of that problem confirms. We shall perceive, that all which has been taught us by God's revelation, corresponds with all that our reason, in its highest exercise, had before been striving to establish. Religion will become to us a conviction. And what conviction, I do not say more probable, but what conviction, of any comparative weight, can be opposed to it? We plan for the future; we propose to ourselves some object to be attained within a short period, or during a course of years. But we proceed throughout upon probabilities; upon a probable judgment of its value, of our power to secure it, of the means at our command, and of the accidents by which we may be favored; and, among

all these uncertainties, enters one far graver, the uncertainty of life itself. Yet we go on. But, if Christianity be true, there is no doubt about our ability to attain those objects which a religious man proposes to himself; there is no doubt of their inestimable value; and the uncertainty or the shortness of life at once ceases to enter into our calculations.*

Of the facts on which religion is founded, we can pretend to no assurance, except that derived from the testimony of God, from the Christian revelation. He who has received this testimony is a Christian; and we may ask now, as was asked by an apostle; "Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus was the Son of God." Christain faith alone affords such consolation and support as the heart needs amid the deprivations and sufferings of life; it alone gives action and strength to all that is noblest in our nature; it alone furnishes a permanent and effectual motive for growing virtue; it alone enables man to act conformably to his nature and destiny. This is always true. But we may have a deeper sense of the value of our faith, if we look abroad on the present

* See Note II. "On the Objection to Faith in Christianity, as resting on Historical Facts and Critical Learning."





state of the world, and see, all around, the waves heaving and the tempest rising. Everywhere is instability and uncertainty. But from the blind conflict between men exasperated and degraded by injustice and suffering, and men corrupted and hardened by the abuse of power, from the mutual outrages of angry political parties, in which the most unprincipled and violent become the leaders, from the fierce collision of mere earthly passions and cravings, whatever changes may result, no good is to be hoped. All improvement in the civilized world, all advance in human happiness, is identified with the spread of Christian principles, of Christian truth, of that faith, resting on reason, which connects man with God, makes him feel, that the good of others is his personal good, assures him of a future life of retribution, and, by revealing his immortality, calms his passions.

Gentlemen, I have addressed your understandings, not your feelings. But the subject of Christianity is one which cannot be rightly apprehended without the strongest feeling; not the transient excitement existing for an hour, and then forgotten, but a feeling possessing the whole heart, and governing our lives. Of the form of infidelity, which we have been consider-

ing, there can be but one opinion among honest men. Great moral offences in individuals are, indeed, commonly connected with the peculiar character of their age, and with a prevailing want of moral sentiment in regard to such offences, in the community in which they are committed. This may be pleaded in excuse for the individual; but the essential nature of the offence remains. It is a truth, which few among us will question, that, for any one to pretend to be a Christian teacher, who disbelieves the divine origin and authority of Christianity, and would undermine the belief of others, is treachery towards God and man. If I were to address such a one, I would implore him by all his remaining self-respect, by his sense of common honesty, by his regard to the well-being of his fellow-men, by his fear of God, if he believe that there is a God, and by the awful realities of the future world, to stop short in his course; and, if he cannot become a Christian, to cease to be a pretended Christian teacher, and to assume his proper character.

If we have taken a correct view of the state of opinion throughout the world, you will perceive, that it is a subject of very serious consideration, and of individual action, to all of us who have faith in Christianity, and especially to





you, Gentlemen, who have devoted yourselves to the Christian ministry. Every motive, that addresses the better part of our nature, urges you to be faithful in your office. A sincere moral purpose will strengthen your judgment and ability; for he who has no other object but to do right, will not find it difficult to ascertain his duty, and the means of performing it. He who earnestly desires to serve his fellow-men is so strongly drawn toward the truth, as the essential means of human happiness, that he is not likely to be turned aside by any dangerous error. Our Saviour referred to no supernatural illumination when he said; *If any one will do the will of him who sent me, he shall know concerning my doctrine, whether it be from God, or whether I speak from myself.* What you believe and feel, it is the business of your lives, and this is a great privilege, to make others believe and feel. In the view of the worldly, the sphere of your duties may often appear humble; but you will not on that account break through it to seek for notoriety beyond. Deep and permanent feeling is very quiet and persevering. It cannot fail in its purposes. It cannot but communicate itself in some degree to others, and it is secure of the approbation of God.

## NOTE I.

### Some further Remarks on the Characteristics of the modern German School of Infidelity.

That infidelity should take for a disguise the name of Christianity, is a remarkable phenomenon of our times. It may be explained in part by the fact, that the principal leaders of the new Antichristian school have been placed in circumstances, in which the profession of Christianity was required, either by the nature of their offices, as professedly Christian teachers, or by a regard to decorum and their worldly interests. But they were surrounded by unbelief. It had thoroughly pervaded the metaphysical philosophy of their country. It had been at work throughout the literature of continental Europe; and they had neither deep piety, nor moral strength, nor power of comprehension and reasoning, to resist its influence. Christianity they abandoned to its enemies. They joined those enemies. But it was necessary to have something that might be called Christianity; and they accordingly have given that name to multiform and unstable speculations of their own, unconnected with any established facts or principles; and in framing which, it seems to have been forgotten, that what is proposed for belief requires some evidence of its truth.

These speculations have been favored by existing modes of thinking and writing. In rude times, when





the mind is struggling with half-formed ideas, those claiming superior wisdom have usually affected an obscure, enigmatic, paradoxical style, full of words and figures remote from the apprehension of the vulgar. Dark sayings are characteristic of one stage in the progress of the human intellect. The meaning which is not clearly understood by its propounder is thus sheltered from investigation, and his oracles are enabled to escape from confutation in the darkness. His teachings are magnified by mystery ; and the disciple thinks himself initiated in some esoteric doctrine, too profound for common minds. Instead of the care with which a true philosopher endeavours to express real knowledge in the most perspicuous manner, there is a constant striving to disguise trivial, erroneous, and extravagant conceptions, in unusual forms of language.

In our own age, by a sort of anachronism, if I may so speak, we have had much of this style of writing, particularly in the irreligious speculations we are considering. And this has served partially to obscure, I doubt not from the writers themselves, the real character of what could not have borne the light of day. I will quote a single sentence, which I happen lately to have met with, that may especially serve to illustrate what has been said, as it is a professed exposition of the purpose of the "New Theology," and of the object of his own theological life, by one of the most able leaders of the school. "The greatest and most pregnant idea of the New Theology," says De Wette, "the establishment of which has been the main business of my theological life, is, that what is proposed for religious faith must contain nothing metaphysical, or only so much as is necessary for a clear understanding of the faith ; that its essence is not in propositions which are objects of knowledge, but in

a pious apprehension of things, purified and enlightened by knowledge ; " * and he proceeds to argue against its being founded on an historical acquaintance with Christianity. The shadowy meaning of the sentence I have quoted, escapes in any attempt to grasp it. Yet this fact may not be universally admitted. He who does not think clearly himself, whose conceptions are vague and inconsistent, is not sensible of the want of definiteness or meaning in what he reads. He attaches some unformed notions to words, that in fact convey no coherent ideas ; and may regard himself, in consequence, as a profound thinker, able to comprehend what even wise men cannot.

I will give one other extract from the article by De Wette, just quoted, in which he describes what the " new rational theology " has yet to do.

" The new rational theology must accomplish the solution of the problem of producing a living recognition of faith in its independence of metaphysical and historical knowledge ; so that finally, without resolving the events in the history of Jesus into what is merely ideal, it may cause them to be received in their ideal significance, as conveying ideas of faith ; not resting the truth of Christian faith, as if it were a duty so to do, upon common, naked, historical truth ; but confining the his-

* " Es ist die grösste und fruchtbarste Idee der neuern Theologie (und deren Geltendmachung ist die Hauptaufgabe meines theologischen Lebens), dass die Glaubenslehre keine Metaphysik, oder doch nur soviel davon enthalten darf, als zur klaren Verständigung des Glaubens nöthig ist ; dass ihr Wesen nicht in wissenschaftlichen Sätzen, sondern in dem wissenschaftlich gereinigten und erleuchteten frommen Bewusstseyn besteht." See an article by De Wette on a work of Olshausen in the first number, for 1834, of Ulmann and Umbreit's " Theologische Studien und Kritiken," p. 137.





torical proof to the few essential events, leaving the rest open to free inquiry. Especially let it renounce what has hitherto been customary, the poor and unscientific appeal to miraculous evidence. . . . . Its last office is to make the might of the community of Christians again effective, and to plant faith in living power in the living life." *

The profession of belief in what one does not believe, on a subject so momentous as Christianity, if it do not benumb and gradually destroy the moral feelings, necessarily produces a bewilderment of mind, that renders all objects of religious faith indistinct and uncertain ; that mistakes and misnames them, and gives occasion to dreamy speculations, that appear as much out of place amid the reasonings of clear-minded men, as would the spectres of a diseased imagination, were they to become visible in the living world around us. Thus it has been with the teachers of the new school of infidelity, that calls itself Christian. An intelligent believer can read but a little way in their writings, without finding that they do not mean what he means by Christianity ; though

* " Die neuere rationale Theologie muss die Lösung der Angabe vollbringen, den Glauben in seiner Unabhängigkeit von metaphysischer und historischer Wissenschaft zur lebendigen Anerkennung zu bringen, und zwar in letzterer Hinsicht so, dass sie die Thatsachen der Geschicte Jesu, ohne sie ideal zu verflüchtigen, in ihrer idealen Bedeutung, als Träger von Glaubensideen, geltend macht; die Wahrheit des christlichen Glaubens nicht (etwa wie ein Recht) auf die gemeine, nackte, historische Wahrheit gründen, und den historischen Beweis auf die wenigen wesentlichen Thatsachen einschrankt, während sie die Untersuchung der übrigen frei gibt. Insbesondere verzichte sie auf die bisher gewöhnlicher so kleinliche und unwissenschaftliche Führung des Wunderbeweises. . . . . Sie mache endlich wieder die Wichtigkeit der christlichen Gemeinshaft geltend, und pflanze den Glauben in lebendiger Kraft in das lebendige Leben." Ib. pp. 151, 152.

it may be more difficult to ascertain what is intended, or with what pretence the word is used, as significant of their belief. Sometimes it may seem, that the writer receives the essential doctrines taught by Christ, though not upon his authority. Sometimes, that he regards Christian morality and Christian feelings as right, and to be applauded. Sometimes he may appear to be affected by a single aspect of our faith ; to view it, for example, as a system that enlarges men's charity, and vindicates the claims of the poor and oppressed, though this conception of it is perhaps oftener adopted for popular declamation, than with any operative sense of the obligations it imposes. And sometimes the notion seems to be, that the religious sentiment is natural and universal ; that it has manifested itself under different forms, always, however, enveloped in mythology, fable, and superstition ; that Christianity is the best form in which it has appeared, and that, therefore, it is to be respected ; it being, at the same time, understood, that Christianity is no permanent thing, but must, with the advance of men, go on improving, and divesting itself more and more of its historical relations.

But, sometimes, we find a system drawn out by one of the professed Christians of whom I speak, and it may be worth while to look at a single example, one of the most elaborate, to see what resemblance it has to Christianity. It is just forty years since Schleiermacher, one of the most noted of the modern German school, published his work "On Religion." In a tone of pretension very foreign from the common character of intelligent men, he professes to have written it, not "through any determination of his judgment," but through "a divine call," a "heavenly impulse." It is a system of pantheism, wrought up in a highly declamatory style, in which

the language often soars beyond meaning, and in which there is scarcely an attempt at what may be called reasoning. Religion, according to him, is the sense of the union of the individual with the universe, with Nature, or, in the language of the sect, with the One and All. * It is a feeling; it has nothing to do with belief or action; † it is unconnected with morality; their provinces are different; ‡ it is independent of the idea of a personal God. § The idea of a personal God is pure mythology. ‖ And the belief and desire of personal immortality are "wholly irreligious," as being opposed to that which is the aim of religion, "the annihilation of one's own personality," "the living in the One and All," "the becoming, as far as possible, one with the universe." ¶ The writer whom I have quoted, partook of the sacrament on his death-bed, as a Christian. We may have a striking apprehension of the relation in which his system stands to Christianity, if we imagine the words of Jesus struck out from the Gospels, and his teachings substituted in their stead.

Schleiermacher, in his treatise, ** introduces a glowing eulogy on Spinoza, commencing with an apostrophe; "Offer with me a lock of hair to the manes of the holy, the wronged Spinoza;" and, in this eulogy, he pronounces him to have stood "alone and unapproached, because he was full of religion and of a holy spirit." About the same time, Paulus, another German theologian of about equal note, published the first edition of the collected works of Spinoza, in his preface to which he says, that "the superstitious and ridiculous horror of the atheism, so called, of Spinoza, was shaken off by his countrymen

* See particularly pp. 48, seqq., 4th ed. 1831. † pp. 53, 54. ‡ pp. 21, seqq. § pp. 110, seqq. ‖ p. 59. ¶ pp. 118, seqq. ** pp. 47, 48.

earlier than by the intelligent elsewhere." To deny the atheism of Spinoza, is merely to contend, that the word is not to be used in its common and established sense; and, such being the case, it may strike us as a marked expression of character, in a pretended Christian divine, to talk of a superstitious and ridiculous horror of atheism.

The disciples of the new school are in Germany called Rationalists or Naturalists. In the last edition of the "Conversations-Lexicon," a work extensively circulated in that country, there is an article on "Rationalism and Supernaturalism," in which the writer, after having asserted the victories of Rationalism over "the authority of revelation," and predicted its final complete triumph, thus concludes:

"But, notwithstanding that Rationalism has obtained a decided victory over Supernaturalism on scientific ground, yet, on the other hand, it wants much of having attained its full scientific developement. Especially, it is still deficient, though much has been done, in a well-grounded psychological proof of the religious nature of the human spirit, and in clearly establishing the psychological powers on which religion in man is dependent."

It follows, that what religion is, and especially what that is for which the name of Christianity is assumed, must be wholly undefined.

The writer adds one more sentence: "The work of David Frederic Strauss, entitled 'The Life of Jesus critically treated,' (2 vols. 1835, 1836,) must give rise to a sharp contest between Rationalism and Supernaturalism, as it has already called forth many writings in opposition to it."

Few products of the new German theology have excited so much attention as this work of Strauss, the

object of which is to show, that the account of Jesus in the Gospels is destitute of historical truth. I will quote at some length what I suppose to be the last exposition that the author has given of his notions of Christianity, as it appears toward the end of the third edition of the second volume of his work (p. 767), published during the present year. It may serve as an example of the style of thinking and writing, that characterizes the school to which he belongs.

"The key of the whole Christology is this, that the subject of those predicates which the Church ascribes to Christ, is not to be regarded as an individual, but as an Idea, a real idea, however, not as, according to Kant, an imaginary one. Considered as existing in an individual, in a God-man, the attributes and offices which the doctrine of the Church ascribes to Christ are inconsistent with each other; in the idea of the species, they agree together. Humanity is the union of the two natures; it is God become man, the infinite renouncing its infinity and becoming finite, and the finite spirit conscious of its infinity. * It is the child of a visible mother and an invisible father; of Spirit and of Nature. It is the worker of miracles; inasmuch as, in the progress of man's histo-

* This language refers to the doctrines of Hegel, whose metaphysical system is of the latest fashion in Germany, and who maintains the unity of Spirit, human and divine, as the element of the universe; or, in the words of Strauss, (Vol. II. p. 766,) which cannot be rendered into English so as to give a show of meaning; "dass der göttliche Geist in seiner Entäusserung und Erniedrigung der menschliche, und der menschliche in seiner Einkehr in sich und Erhebung über sich der göttliche ist;" "*that the Divine Spirit in its renunciation and abasement is the human, and the human in its withdrawal into itself, and its elevation above itself, is the Divine*;" or, as he elsewhere (p. 762) expresses it, that "God and man are in themselves [essentially] one:" "Gott und Mensch an sich sind Eins."

ry, the spirit is continually obtaining more full mastery over nature, as it exists in man and around him ; nature being subjected to its activity as a powerless material. It is the sinless ; inasmuch as the process of its developement is blameless ; pollution cleaves only to the individual, but in the species, and in its history, is thrown off. It is the being who dies, and rises from the dead, and ascends to heaven ; inasmuch as, through the negation of its *naturality* [what in its composition belongs to nature], it is continually attaining a higher spiritual life, and by throwing off its finiteness, as a personal, national spirit, a spirit of this world, its unity with the infinite spirit of heaven is brought out. Through faith in this Christ, particularly in his death and resurrection, is man justified before God ; that is, through the quickening power of the idea of man's essential nature ; for conformably to the view, that the negation of *naturality* and sinfulness, which is but the negation of a negation, seeing that they are but the negation of the spiritual, is the only way for men to attain the true spiritual life, will the individual partake of the divinely-human life of the species.

"This alone is the absolute purport of the Christology. That this appears connected with the person and history of an individual, belongs merely to its historical form."

Such a passage is adapted to give a strong impression of the present state of intellectual action in Germany, where writing of this kind, instead of being received with universal wonder and derision, is regarded as matter of grave discussion, and as belonging to the highest department of philosophy.

With the vague notions of a Christianity which is not that of Christ and God, has been connected, as I have said, the doctrine of a Christianity that is to develope

itself, and conform to the progress of the human mind, and in which men are continually to make new discoveries ; and this mode of speaking seems to have been adopted by some without any distinct conception of what it implies. True Christianity is always the same. The facts which God made known by Christ, the facts of his existence and paternal character, and of our immortality and responsibility, admit of no change and of no adaptation to the progress of men ; and human speculations upon them, however far they may be carried, can have no claim to be considered as parts of Christianity. If indeed such language be used without any other meaning, than that men, as they grow wiser, will understand more correctly the true character of Christianity, and that as they grow better, they will feel its influence more deeply, then the thought is unobjectionable, and we have only to regret the incorrect use of language intended for its expression.

In considering the view which we have taken of the state of opinion among many who still call themselves Christians, a question naturally arises, upon what ground they have erected the systems which they have substituted for Christianity. It has been in some measure already answered. The writers of the school of which I speak, are more occupied in undermining Christianity, than in providing a stable foundation for any thing proposed by them in its stead. Their objections and difficulties concerning our faith coincide with those which acknowledged infidels have heretofore urged ; but they seldom, like those infidels, retreat upon the evidences of Natural Religion. On the contrary, it is a prevalent doctrine with these speculatists, that the argument from final causes, as it is technically expressed, is of no worth ; or, in popular language, that there are no marks

of design, wisdom, and goodness in the universe, from which we may infer the existence and perfections of God. At the same time there is among them a very common, if not a prevalent, rejection of the belief of the personal immortality of man.

The most generally received notion seems to be, that religion arises out of the nature of man; that it is a feeling, a sentiment, an apprehension of something, it is hard to say what, that is intuitive or spontaneous, though admitting of cultivation. It is not necessary to inquire how this doctrine, this new creed, that is to supersede all others, may be reconciled with the profession of the Christian faith. It is necessary to attend to only one consideration. Feelings and sentiments cannot be excited, unless their proper objects are believed or imagined to exist. We can have no *religious* sentiment of the Infinite, unless we have faith in the one Infinite Being, the God of Christianity. We can have no *religious* love of the beautiful and true, or, in common language, of beauty and truth, if we do not recognise something beautiful and true beyond the limits of this world. We can have no feeling of our blessedness as *formed in the image of God, and made in the likeness of his eternity*, if we do not believe in our immortality. We can have no strong sense of moral responsibility, if we regard all responsibility as terminating with the very uncertain period that may remain to us of life. All feeling, I do not say all rational, but all real feeling, must have respect to supposed realities, and be founded on the belief of their existence. However great may be any one's tendency to mysticism, his affections cannot be wrought upon by what he regards as nonentities. He who has any religious sentiment must have a religious creed, right or wrong, briefer or more comprehensive. Reli-





gious feeling must be founded on religious belief; and, in proportion as any one's belief is clear and firm and true, so will his feelings be strong and permanent and operative of good. But all rational belief must be founded on reason.

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## NOTE II.

### On the Objection to Faith in Christianity, as resting on Historical Facts and Critical Learning.

In the attempts of the German theologians of the New School to separate what they call Christianity from its historical relations and its connexion with the New Testament, very much has been imperfectly and obscurely said upon the impossibility of resting religious faith on such foundations. What is said, though often not altogether intelligible, evidently refers to a view of the subject which it is important to consider; and to objections that may arise in an intelligent mind. I will endeavour to state them distinctly in my own words.

It may be objected, then, to Christianity, that religion is a universal want, and should be founded on some universal principle of our nature; but that Christianity, on the contrary, rests on something extrinsic to our nature, on testimony. That not only does this testimony in itself admit of doubt, but that it requires investigation. That the capacity and the means of a proper investigation of it are far from being common to all; and that many, or rather a large majority, must therefore receive Christianity, if they do receive it, without any satisfac-

tory evidence of its truth. Nor is this all; it may be further objected, that the history of this supposed miraculous revelation is contained in certain books. In them are to be found the doctrines supposed to be made known. But a question immediately arises respecting the genuineness of those books. It cannot be certainly proved; for certainty is inconsistent with the nature of the only evidence that can be produced. This evidence is, furthermore, such as requires much learning and study to enable any one, by himself, to estimate its force. And, supposing the genuineness of the books to be rendered probable, they are in ancient languages, understood by few; and even when the language is mastered, still much various knowledge is further necessary to give them a probable explanation. By the generality, therefore, the historical fact of a revelation, the genuineness of its supposed records, and the purport of its supposed doctrines, must all be received on trust; and the few who have the capacity and means of investigation, can, at best, attain to nothing more than probable, not certain, conclusions; whereas religion, to be universal, should have an assured foundation in the very nature of man. It can rest upon nothing extrinsic to it.

I have endeavoured to state these considerations, which well deserve attention, with clearness and force; avoiding those loose assertions, and that indefinite language which some have fallen into from want of a distinct apprehension of what it was their purpose to urge. Let us now see what other view can be taken of the subject.

In one sense, and an obvious sense of the words, religion is a universal want of man. It is required for the developement of his moral and spiritual powers. He is suffering, tempted, and imperfect; and he needs it for consolation, for strength to resist, and for encourage-





ment to make progress. It is connected, not with any particular faculty or faculties, but with the whole nature of man as a moral and immortal being, a creature of God. But religious principle and feeling, however important, are necessarily founded on the belief of certain facts; of the existence and providence of God, and of man's immortality. Now the evidence of these facts is not intuitive; and whatever ground for the belief of them may be afforded by the phenomena of nature, or the ordinary course of events, it is certain, that the generality of men have never been able by their unassisted reason to obtain assurance concerning them. Out of the sphere of those enlightened by divine revelation, neither the belief nor the imagination of them has operated with any considerable effect to produce the religious character. The belief of these facts, if it exist independently of Christian faith, must either be a mere prejudice, or must be a deduction of reason. But the process of reasoning required to attain the assurance of a Christian, if it might have been successfully pursued by a very wise, enlightened, and virtuous heathen, never was thus pursued; and it is scarcely necessary to say, that to the generality of the heathen world before Christianity, the facts, that there is a God, in the Christian sense of that name, that man is immortal, and that the present life is a state of preparation for the future, were not matters of religious faith. Nor was there any likelihood, that without Christianity they would ever become so. In rejecting Christianity, because it requires a process of reasoning to establish its truth, if we attempt to provide any other foundation for religion, it can only be by having recourse to a different process of reasoning, which experience has shown to be inefficacious, as respects a great majority of men.

But the rejection of Christianity on the ground just stated, and the pretence that the only true, universal source of religion is to be found in the common nature of man, have been connected by many with the rejection of all the reasoning by which those facts that are the basis of religion may be otherwise rendered probable ; and often with the rejection of all belief in the facts themselves. The religion of which they speak, therefore, exists merely, if it exist at all, in undefined and unintelligible feelings, having reference perhaps to certain imaginations, the result of impressions communicated in childhood, or produced by the visible signs of religious belief existing around us, or awakened by the beautiful and magnificent spectacles which nature presents. Sometimes, as we have elsewhere seen, they are represented as being excited by a system of pantheism ; a doctrine that rejects all proper religious belief, and does not admit of being stated in words expressing a rational meaning. In this case, whatever feelings may exist, they can have no claim to be called religious.

There is, then, no other mode of establishing religious belief, but by the exercise of reason, by investigation, by forming a probable judgment upon facts. Christianity, in requiring this process, requires nothing more than any other form of religion must do. He who on this account rejects it, cannot have recourse to Natural Religion. This can offer him no relief from the necessity of reasoning ; and still less can it pretend to give him any higher assurance than Christianity affords. If its voice be listened to, it will only direct him back to Christianity. If he will not refrain from using the name of religion, his only resource to escape the difficulty and uncertainty of reasoning, is to take refuge in some cloud of mysticism, that belies the form of religion.

From those who reject Christianity on account of the labor necessary in fully ascertaining its evidences and character, it may reasonably be required, that, whatever be the new form of religion which they propose, it should be generally intelligible, and established by proofs not requiring an effort of thought to be expected only from disciplined minds; and proofs, at the same time, as satisfactory as they are easy to be understood. But the contrast is very great between this reasonable requirement and the character of the writings of those by whom the objection is urged. On the one hand, these writings are evidently not adapted to common comprehension; and, on the other, in proportion as any one is accustomed to think clearly and reason consecutively, so will he be the more struck with their uncertain meaning, or the absence of meaning, the inconsistency of thought, and the want, or the inconsequence, of reasoning. It has even been made a matter of boasting by the disciples of the school, that these speculations are to be understood only by minds of a peculiar cast, prepared for their reception.

But we have not, it may be said, yet removed the difficulty, that the evidence and character of Christianity, in order to be properly understood, require investigations which are beyond the capacity or the opportunities of a great majority of men. Let us then consider to what this difficulty amounts.

In the first place, it is founded merely on the fact, that religious knowledge has the character common to all our higher knowledge, that it requires labor, thought, and learning to attain it. This is a fact; and it is a fact likewise, that its attainment is attended with peculiar difficulties, such as do not commonly embarrass men in the pursuit of mere worldly sciences; since all vices and moral defects, all bad passions, sinister motives, low

affections, and selfish aims, every thing contrary to perfect sincerity of purpose, operates to draw us away from the truth. But these facts are true of the study of religion in general, not of that of Christianity alone ; and, therefore, form no special objection to the character of Christianity.

All the truths of philosophy, all those belonging to the higher departments of knowledge, all those connected with the intellectual and moral progress of mankind, all those most important to our worldly comfort and enjoyments, so far as their recognition has depended on man alone, have required strenuous and long-continued efforts of intellect to effect their gradual developement, their clear exposition, and their general reception. These efforts have been made by a few individuals, the instructers of their race. The processes of reasoning by which these truths are established are now gone over and fully comprehended by only a comparatively small portion of men. But the benefit of these truths, the practical result of those investigations, are now a common property and a common blessing. We are wise through the wisdom of others. Human knowledge is the aggregate wealth of civilized man, not the peculiar possession of individuals ; and all may share its advantages, whether or not they have contributed to it, or even understand the means of its accumulation. To take one example ; — throughout the enlightened portion of the world, the facts which astronomy has made known are generally received. These facts are applied to most important purposes, as regards our worldly concerns. By affording such facilities, as could not have been imagined before they existed, to the intercourse between nations, they have rendered incalculable service, in promoting civilization, knowledge, and the social virtues. They





have made the heavens teach us religion, converting them into a natural revelation of God. But astronomy is a science which it has been the labor of more than two thousand years to bring to its present state. This science, its proofs and its relations, are now the study of a life. If, then, because what it teaches is not obvious, but requires long investigation; or because its proofs can be fully understood but by few; or because it is not the result of the unfolding of any faculty or tendency common to all men, any one should conclude that the truths which it makes known are to be rejected, and the benefits flowing from them disregarded, he would reason as wisely as he who reasons in a similar manner concerning Christianity.

In the one case, and in the other, and throughout the whole sphere of our higher knowledge, the results of the intellectual efforts of a few, become the common benefit of many. None has made himself master of all the departments of knowledge; none has followed out any one of them into all its ramifications, and verified for himself every step in the evidence necessary to establish his belief. He who fancies he may have done so, can have little comprehension of the relations of any important subject. However far one may have carried his own investigations, there is much that he receives because it is generally admitted as true, or because it is stated by writers on whom he is satisfied that he may rely. We are not insulated individuals, independent thinkers, whose business it is, each to build up a little system of his own out of the poor materials that he has gathered with the labor of his own hands. We are sharers in the wisdom of our race. The masses of knowledge which enlightened men are continually bringing into the treasury of human improvement, are soon

converted into common currency. Each individual is not obliged to dig the ore from the mine for himself. Those who think most wisely are instructers of each other. They receive much upon each other's authority. The foundation of their wisdom is the aggregate wisdom of the age in which they live. Linked together, as we are, intellectually as well as morally, the individual makes progress with those about him. Whatever truths he may hold, he has not attained them by the unaided efforts of his own mind ; he has commenced with some share, great or small, in the common stock of knowledge. It cannot, therefore, be an objection to any truth whatever, and, consequently, not to the truth of Christianity, that the full comprehension of its character and evidence is the result of studies which are pursued only by few, and that the many want capacity or opportunity to satisfy themselves on the subject by their independent, unassisted exertions.

But it may be said that no direct answer has yet been given to the question, — On what ground is the truth of Christianity to be received by those who are unable to give themselves to a full study of its evidences ? The reply is, that it is to be received on the same ground as we receive all other truths, of which we have not ourselves mastered the evidences ; for the same reason that we do not reject all that vast amount of knowledge which is not the result of our own deductions. Our belief in those truths, the evidence of which we cannot fully examine for ourselves, is founded in a greater or less degree on the testimony of others, who have examined their evidence, and whom we regard as intelligent and trustworthy. This is a ground of belief which is universal, and which if we relinquish, far the greater part of human knowledge must be relinquished with it. The

likeness in the essential powers of men's minds gives them a common property in each other's acquisitions. What wise and honest men, who have devoted themselves to the examination of a subject, are satisfied is true, we may conclude, unless we can discern some special reason to the contrary, that we also should perceive to be true after similar investigation. This reliance on the knowledge of others may be called *belief on trust*, or *belief on authority ;* but perhaps a more proper name for it would be *belief on testimony*, the testimony of those who have examined a subject to their conviction of the truth of certain facts. The reasonableness of such belief is constantly implied. In their opinions, and practical concerns, men are continually deferring to the judgment of those whom they think better informed than themselves. We commit our health and lives into the hands of a physician, relying implicitly on his opinions concerning our disease and its cure, while of the correctness of those opinions we may have no means of forming a judgment, other than our belief in his information and good sense. To take an example from the science to which we have before referred ; — very few individuals, scarcely one in a million throughout the civilized world, have gone through the whole body of evidence by which it is demonstrated, that all the motions of the bodies of the solar system in relation to each other are to be referred to the one law of gravity ; yet he would be thought unwise, who, because he had not studied this evidence, nor any part of it, should therefore doubt the testimony of those who have. In the application of this universal principle of belief to the evidences and character of Christianity, all that is required of an intelligent man, is, that he should admit it as an element in his reasoning ; that he should rely,

to a certain extent, on the trustworthiness of others who have made the subject their particular study ; that he should allow the truth of facts which they affirm, and which he sees no cause for doubting. Of the reasoning upon those facts he may judge for himself ; and he will also judge to what extent he should thus receive information on trust. But it is no objection to Christianity, that a knowledge of its evidences and its character must rest in a certain degree on what is a universal condition of human knowledge, trust in the capacity and honesty of others. The admission of this principle does not weaken the force of its evidences in the mind of any man of correct judgment. In maintaining, therefore, that the thorough investigation of the evidences and character of our religion requires much knowledge and much thought, and the combined and continued labor of different minds, we maintain nothing that gives to Christianity a different character from what belongs to all the higher and more important branches of knowledge, and nothing inconsistent with its being in its nature a universal religion.

We have seen the reasonableness of believing, to a certain extent, on trust ; or, if I may so use the term, on testimony. In considering the subject, the reasonableness of this principle of belief is not to be confounded with a very important fact concerning it ; the fact that it is the actual foundation of belief in a great majority of mankind, on almost all subjects lying beyond the sphere of personal experience. There are those, who, in treating of man, seem to consider themselves as types of the human race in its actual condition ; and, overestimating perhaps their own powers of investigation, indulge in declamation concerning independence of thought, in which what is true is applicable only to a





comparatively small number. Our first impressions, the belief of childhood, are the result of our trust in the testimony of others ; and a similar trust, whether it be recognised by them or not, continues to be with a majority of men a main source of their opinions. Without any reasoning on the subject, we expect the operation of this principle of belief. We suppose, as a general fact, that one educated as a Roman Catholic, will identify that form of faith with Christianity, however wide the difference may appear to us. We should regard it as a marvel, and as indicating extraordinary intellectual energy in the individual, should one brought up as a Mahometan become a sincere and intelligent Christian. The opinions of the majority of men are determined by the intellectual influences acting upon them, which have their origin in a few minds.

The principle, then, of believing on testimony, however necessary and universal, may lead, and has led, to great errors ; but this characteristic it has in common with every other principle of belief, except personal experience or mathematical demonstration. It is further to be observed, that all wrong opinions, though they may be propagated by it, must have had their origin in some other source. To whatever errors this form of belief may lead, it is an inevitable concomitant of our nature. The generality of men can be no wiser than their instructers.

This view of human belief, as resting in so great a degree upon what may be called testimony, serves to show strongly the responsibility that lies on all those who undertake to influence the opinions of their fellow-men, on any subject, by their belief concerning which their moral principles or their happiness may be affected. Whoever may do so, should have natural capacity for

the office ; he should have the requisite knowledge, of which extensive learning commonly makes a part ; and he should be influenced by no motives inconsistent with a love of truth and goodness, by no craving for notoriety, no restless desire to be the talk of the day, no party spirit, and no selfish purpose of maintaining doctrines, the profession of which he cannot renounce without the loss of some worldly advantage. Before he inculcates any peculiar opinions, he should have thoroughly studied them, have clearly defined them to his own mind, have traced out their relations, and have become persuaded that future investigation will not lead him to change them. And further, he should believe himself to see clearly, that their promulgation will tend to good ; since, if there be a God who rules all things in infinite wisdom and goodness, no general law or fact in the universe can ultimately tend to evil, and consequently no general truth, or affirmation of such law or fact, can be ultimately mischievous. In proportion, therefore, as the beneficial effect of any doctrine is doubtful, so far is its truth doubtful on the supposition that there is a God. And if there be not a God, on which supposition truth might be mischievous, the moral offence of publishing a mischievous truth would still remain.

Judging from the practice of the day, the responsibility of which I speak is not greatly regarded ; and we may conclude from the language which is freely used, that it is not generally understood. Men throw out their opinions rashly, reserving to themselves the liberty of correcting them, if they are wrong. If you would know for what doctrines they hold themselves responsible, you must look to their last publication. It deserves praise, we are told, for one to confess himself to have been in error. It does, without doubt ; as it also de-

serves praise for one to repent of a crime and to make reparation ; but a wise and good man, as he will avoid committing crimes, so, according to his ability, he will avoid promulgating errors on important, or unimportant, subjects. Another loose notion is, that there should be no discouragement, by the expression of moral disapprobation, to the promulgation of any doctrine, whatever may be its character, or whatever may be the moral or intellectual qualifications of the teacher ; for that this would be putting a check upon freedom of discussion. The doctrine may be confuted, it is said, if it is erroneous. But it should be recollected that many errors are in alliance with men's passions, vices, and follies, and, that when plausibly affirmed, they may be readily admitted by those who will not listen to, or perhaps could not comprehend, a series of explanations and arguments. It should likewise be recollected, that a writer careless of facts, bold in his assertions, and confused and illogical in his conceptions, may commit more errors in a page, than an able man can confute in twenty ; that these errors may be so gross, that one conversant with the subject may regard the task of exposing them as unworthy of him ; and that it is hard to condemn such as are capable of informing others, to the poor employment of rooting out errors, the growth of which is encouraged by those who assign them the task. But it is only necessary to attend to the general principle, that dependent as we all are upon the information and the opinions of others, no one has a right to assume the office of our instructer, who has not labored to qualify himself morally and intellectually for its proper performance.

But to recur to our general subject : — I have endeavoured to state the objection, or the difficulty, we have

been considering, in the plainest manner, and, admitting it in its whole extent, have limited myself to a direct reply. It is said, that a great majority of men are not capable of investigating for themselves the evidences and character of Christianity, and therefore, can have no reasonable foundation for their belief in Christianity. The direct answer, to which alone we have attended, is, that trust in the information, judgment, and integrity of others, to a greater or less extent, as it is a universal and necessary, is also a rational principle of belief. If this be true, any further answer is not required ; but very much more might be said to show the false view of the subject implied in that objection ; and to make it evident, that every one, accustomed to thought and reasoning, may, without any theological learning, strictly so called, be able to satisfy himself of the truth of Christianity by the exercise of his mind upon facts that cannot reasonably be doubted. But this subject involves the whole evidence of our religion ; and it has been my purpose merely to show that this evidence is not to be rejected, because it is analogous in its character to that by which every other important truth is established among men.

The objection we have been considering goes directly against the possibility of any miraculous revelation from God, as a foundation of our religious belief. It would condemn us, as a matter of necessity, to the desolation of our ignorance. It would darken its shades; for, if Christianity be a delusion, if that religion, which the most civilized portion of the world has professed, and the wisest men have believed, be founded in error ; if that religion, which has seemed to bring us near to God, and to confirm all our best hopes, and which has given vigor to every right motive, be false ;





then a deeper and more chilling shade falls upon the world, and all human reasoning becomes more uncertain. By the rejection of Christianity, man is not left in the state in which he was before its promulgation. A new and gloomy marvel appears in the history of our race.

But, in truth, the mere fact that God has made a miraculous communication to men for their good, considered independently of any truths which he may have made known, is one of inexpressible interest. It introduces him within the sphere of human experience, and makes his existence a reality to our minds. It gives a definiteness to our ideas of him, that nothing else could afford. It presents him distinctly to our conceptions and feelings in his paternal character. It establishes a relation between God and man that could not otherwise exist, and immeasurably elevates our race in the scale of being. Christianity, simply as a revelation from God, rises on the history of man, like the sun on the natural world. We may doubt, we may disbelieve it; but it is vain to contend that there cannot be plenary evidence of its truth, or that, this plenary evidence existing, it cannot be made satisfactory to the generality of men.







Norton, Andrews. 1839. Gift of Prof. Norton
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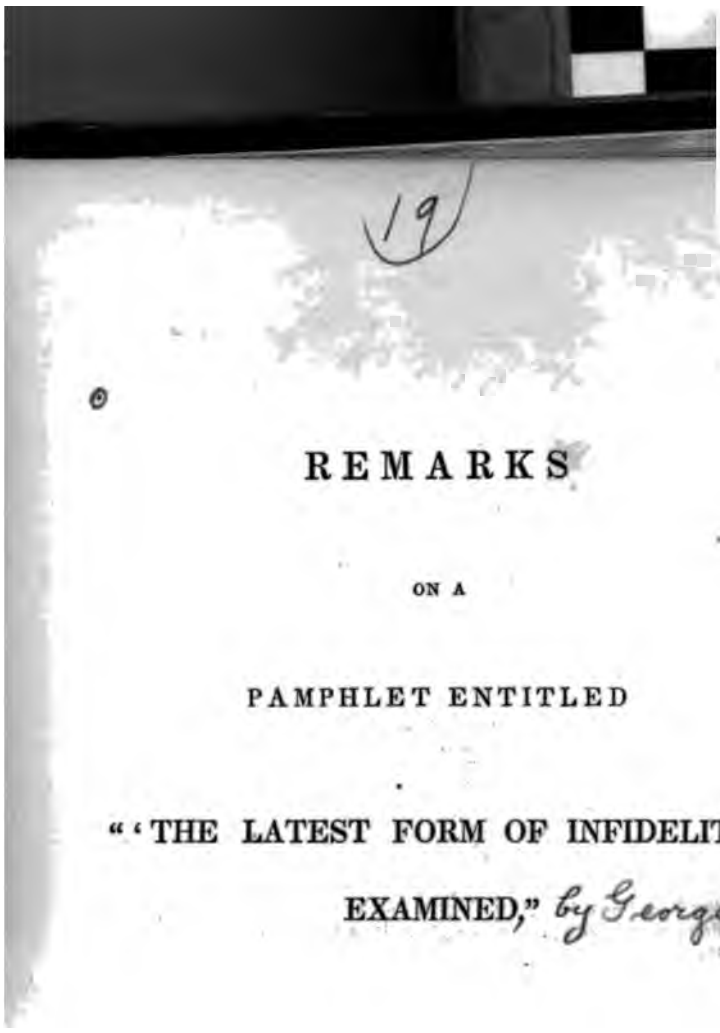
Andrews

# NORTON'S REMARKS

ON A

# LATE PAMPHLET.





# REMARKS

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PAMPHLET ENTITLED

"'THE LATEST FORM OF INFIDELITY'

EXAMINED," by George Ripley

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By ANDREWS NORTON.

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# REMARKS.

An anonymous pamphlet, entitled "'The Latest Form of Infidelity' Examined," has lately appeared, addressed as a letter to me. It was occasioned by my Discourse, delivered before the Alumni of the Theological School at Cambridge. Had the writer confined himself to an examination of my reasoning, I should not have thought that there was any call upon me to take notice of it. But it bears throughout the character of a personal attack; and a considerable portion is expressly occupied in charging me with grave errors. These charges are urged with great confidence, and relate to such topics, that the generality of readers cannot be supposed able to judge for themselves of the correctness of what is asserted or implied. I have thought it right, therefore, to enter into some explanations, which

will enable every one to do so. It is unpleasant to engage in a discussion that has so much of a merely personal character, and is so apart from the subject to which I wished to call public attention. But it has seemed to me due to my friends, and to all who may think and feel with me on the great question at issue.

The occasion being thus presented, I shall also make a few preliminary observations, I can hardly say in explanation of the reasoning of my Discourse, but observations that may serve to show, how much that reasoning has been misapprehended by the writer of the pamphlet.

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## Preliminary Observations.

I have said in my Discourse, (as quoted by the writer of the pamphlet,*) "that the divine authority of him whom God commissioned to speak to us in his name was attested, in the only mode in which it could be, by miraculous displays of his power;" that Christianity offers, "in attestation of the truth of the facts, which it reveals, the only satisfactory proof, the authority of God, evidenced by miraculous displays of his power;" and that "no proof of the

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* p. 31.

divine commission of Christ could be afforded but through miraculous displays of God's power."

These propositions the writer of the pamphlet controverts in a long argument, and cites many authorities in opposition, as he represents, to what I maintained.* He particularly contends, that they imply a rejection of the internal and collateral evidences of Christianity, or, in other words, of all evidence, except the historical evidence. It is unnecessary to follow him in his argument; but the subject itself is important, and the truth respecting it may be made clear in a few words.

A Christian believes, that Jesus Christ claimed to be a messenger from God to men, commissioned to make known to them, by authority from God, facts of which men's reason had not given them, and apparently never could give them, assurance. His firm belief of those facts rests on his faith in Christ. But why does he believe Christ to have been commissioned by God to make them known? No one

* Among those authorities, he quotes (p. 73) one passage written by myself, to which he might have added many more. One other he gives, as supposing it written by me; but I was not the author of the Review of Verplanck's "Evidences of Revealed Religion," from which it is taken.

can be less entitled to credence than he who claims to be a special messenger from God without being able to authenticate his claims. He who affirms, that he is such a messenger, affirms that God has in him wrought a miracle; but this is a miracle of which no other human being can have cognizance, and which is not to be believed without the most decisive proof. What, then, is the proof required? Manifestly it is the attestation of God to the authority of him whom he has commissioned. A miracle of which we have no cognizance can be attested only by miracles of which we have cognizance. If the proposition be clearly stated and understood, that a miraculous revelation can be authenticated only by miracles, I am unable to perceive how it can reasonably be controverted. It is but stating, in other words, the proposition, that we can have no ground for believing in any thing miraculous, where nothing miraculous appears.

But what the proofs are, which we have at the present day, that a divine revelation, so authenticated, was made by Christ, is a very different question. There is an obvious and perfectly intelligible distinction between the evidence necessary to authenticate the fact of a divine revelation, and essentially implied in the exist-

ence of the fact, and the evidence which we may now have, that such a revelation, so stamped with the seal of God, has been actually made. Of the proofs existing at the present day the historical is first to be considered; for, if there were no historical proof, there could be no other. Even as regards the historical proof, however, many considerations concur to give it validity, which are not connected with common historical testimony. But, beside this, there is a vast amount of internal and collateral evidence. The whole history of Jesus bears an ineffaceable character of reality. It is impossible that it should have been a human fiction. The religion in its revelations and moral teachings is throughout worthy of God. In proportion as we better understand the writings of its apostles and evangelists, new evidences of its truth are continually appearing. Its reception and diffusion can be explained only on the supposition, that it was authenticated by miracles as coming from God. It has shown itself to be from God by its influence on the hearts and lives of even its imperfect disciples, and on the whole condition of civilized man. This is a most brief and imperfect enumeration, but it is unnecessary to go on. A religious philosopher can hardly make him-

self acquainted with any fact illustrating the first history and promulgation of our religion, its essential character, the opinions and condition of men before and after its introduction, or the constitution of human nature itself, without perceiving evidence of its truth. This evidence breaks upon us from many different sources; and we may be satisfied very long before we have exhausted it. I know not that the mere intelligent reading of the Gospels, accompanied with a common knowledge of the facts concerning them, is not amply sufficient to produce a thorough conviction of the divine origin of our religion. But all the evidence of which I have spoken, so vast in amount and so various in its character, bears upon one point alone; — that a revelation from God to men, authenticated by miracles, was made through Jesus Christ.

I state these considerations on account of their intrinsic importance. It is not worth while particularly to point out their bearing upon the different erroneous representations given of my opinions by the writer of the pamphlet.

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as [illegible] all supporters of Christianity, to [illegible] [illegible] God.

It is said, that the truths of religion are merely perceived by the mind; that they neither require, nor admit of any intellectual evidence; but that those truths are the truths of Christianity, and, therefore, that there is a direct perception of the truth of Christianity. These propositions embody opinions which are the basis of many modern systems of religion.*

I answer, that a truth is the expression of a fact. With this understanding, it is not necessary to dwell on the metaphysical absurdity of supposing the direct perception of facts existing neither in the sensible world, nor in our own minds; as the fact, for example, of man's immortality. This will be obvious to every one accustomed to think clearly. But, taking a more popular view, we may say, that the propositions laid down would seem to have been framed by one who knew nothing of men as they had been, or as they existed around him, and who was speculating on the imaginary inhabitants of some other planet. What earnest and assured belief of the fundamental truths of

* Those, for example, of Price and, as will hereafter appear, of his follower, De Wette.

to destroy the worth of all evidences of Christianity, as a revelation from God.

It is said, that the truths of religion are directly perceived by the mind; that they neither require, nor admit of, any additional evidence; but that these truths are the truths of Christianity, and, therefore, that there is a direct perception of the truth of Christianity. These propositions embody opinions which are the basis of some modern systems of religion.*

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* Those, for example, of Fries and, as will hereafter appear, of his follower, De Wette.

religion existed among the great mass of mankind before Christianity? How much belief of those truths now exists, which is not to be traced to the influence of Christianity? In how large a number, in any Christian country, does it exist beyond the sphere of those who rest their faith on Christianity as a revelation from God?

But it is further to be observed, that this pretence of placing Christianity upon unassailable ground, upon what is called, falsely, its internal evidence, — this theory, that the facts which it reveals are directly perceived by the mind, — is utterly inconsistent with any belief in Christianity as a revelation from God. No rational man can suppose, that God has miraculously revealed facts, which the very constitution of our nature enables us directly to perceive.

I have said all that seems to me necessary with regard to the reasoning of the pamphlet under notice, and will now proceed to matters of a personal nature. Some interest may, perhaps, attach to these from the explanations respecting various subjects to which they will give occasion. The charges of error made against me relate to Spinoza, Schleiermacher, and De Wette. I shall consider them in this order; and first of

## Spinoza.

I spoke of Spinoza as an atheist. The writer of the pamphlet says, that this was an early prejudice, but that it is one to which "few scholars, conversant, even in a slight degree, with philosophical studies, would now give their sanction;" * and, after various professed quotations from Spinoza, further says, that I "shall now perceive, that he was not an atheist, in any sense; nor a pantheist, in the sense in which that word is commonly used." †

The system of Spinoza has been talked of by many, who apparently have known little concerning it, and mistaken its character. Hence we find such notices of it as some of those collected from different authors by the writer of the pamphlet.‡ I shall endeavour, therefore, to give a correct account of what alone concerns us at present, or, indeed, is in itself of much interest, — his conceptions respecting God.

According to Spinoza there is but one substance existing. This is possessed of infinite attributes. All the phenomena of what we call the created universe, that is, all finite beings,

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* Pamphlet, p. 120. † p. 125. ‡ pp. 126 seqq.

with their properties, acts, and affections; with their moral qualities, good or bad; with their joys and sufferings, are but modifications of the attributes of this sole substance, or, in other words, of this substance itself. This substance has existed from eternity. It could be produced by no other; for one substance cannot produce another; — creation is impossible.* It is "the *immanent* cause of all things, not a *transitive* cause." † These terms are technical and require explanation. An *immanent* cause is that which produces effects only in or upon itself. A *transitive* cause is that which passes out of itself, as it were, to produce, or to act on, something else. The sole substance of the universe is the God of Spinoza; and in the exposition of his system he early begins to denote it by that name. ‡

To this substance, considered in itself, distinct from the effects produced by it in itself, and as the cause of those effects, he gives the name also of *Natura naturans*, which may be explained by the equivalent term, *causal Nature*; while to the modifications produced by

* These principles are stated in the first fifteen propositions of the First Part of his Ethics, in which Part he treats of God.

† Ethices P. I. Prop. 18. Opp. II. p. 54, ed. Paulus.

‡ This name is first given to it in the eleventh proposition.

it in itself, that is, to the phenomena of the universe, he gives the name of *Natura naturata*, for which we may substitute *phenomenal Nature*.*

To this substance considered in itself, to his *Natura naturans*, that is, to his God, *regarded as the cause of all things*, he expressly denies both intellect and will, and argues at length against ascribing them to God. "I will show," he says, "that neither intellect nor will belong to the nature of God." †

But, though this denial of intellect to the

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* As this is an important point in his theory, I quote the passage at length in which he explains his views.

"Antequam ulterius pergam, hic, quid nobis per Naturam naturantem et quid per Naturam naturatam intelligendum sit, explicare volo, vel potius monere. Nam ex antecedentibus jam constare existimo, nempe, quod per Naturam naturantem nobis intelligendum est id, quod in se est et per se concipitur, sive talia substantiæ attributa, quæ æternam et infinitam essentiam exprimunt, hoc est, Deus, quatenus, ut causa libera, consideratur. Per Naturatam autem intelligo id omne, quod ex necessitate Dei naturæ, sive uniuscujusque Dei attributorum sequitur, hoc est, omnes Dei attributorum modos, quatenus considerantur, ut res, quæ in Deo sunt et quæ sine Deo nec esse, nec concipi possunt." — Ethices P. I. Prop. 29. Schol., pp. 61, 62.

By *causa libera* Spinoza means nothing more than a cause unconstrained by any other; as he explains in the demonstration of the seventeenth proposition of the First Part, and in the corollaries to it, pp. 51, 52.

† "Ostendam, ad Dei naturam neque intellectum, neque voluntatem pertinere." Ibid. Prop. 17. Schol., p. 52.

Deity is a fundamental characteristic of the system of Spinoza, there are other positions in his system, which seem at first view irreconcilable with it. Whatever may be the number of the divine attributes, Spinoza supposes that but two can be known by man, and these two are infinite extension (extension being considered by him as the essence of matter*) and infinite thought.† In the Second Part of his Ethics, (in which, it may be observed, he is professedly treating not of God, but of the human mind,) he says, "Thought is an attribute of God; or God is a thinking thing," (*res cogitans.*)‡ He says, that God understands or knows himself, (*seipsum intelligit.*)§ He repeatedly speaks, in this Part and elsewhere, of the intellect of God. And what is remarkable, he makes no express attempt to reconcile these apparent contradictions. But the solution which he does afford, without expressly recognising the contradiction, is altogether consistent with his denying intellect to God, considered as the cause of all things.

This solution, I shall first state in my own

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* See particularly the scholium to the fifteenth proposition of the First Part of his Ethics.

† These alone are specified in his Ethics; and that these alone can be known, he says in his 66th Letter. Opp. I. pp. 673, 674.

‡ Ethices P. II. Prop. 1. § Ibid. Prop. 3. Schol., et alibi.

words, thus: All nature, the universe, considered as an effect, consists only of infinite modifications of the one infinite substance, the God of Spinoza. But whatever may be affirmed of the modifications of any being, may be affirmed of that being itself. *Phenomenal Nature* (Natura naturata) is equally God as *causal Nature*. Now in the infinite universe there is infinite thought and intellect, and a knowledge or understanding of God (for according to Spinoza, there is nothing else to be known or understood but God*); and all this may be predicated of God, considered not as a cause, but as *phenomenal Nature*. I shall now quote to this effect the words of Spinoza himself.

"*Actual* intellect," he says, ("not that I allow," he adds in a scholium, "the supposition of any *potential* intellect,") whether finite or infinite, as also will, desire, love, &c., must be referred to *phenomenal Nature* (ad Naturam

* "Intellectus actu finitus, aut actu infinitus, Dei attributa Deique affectiones comprehendere debet et nihil aliud."—Ethices P. I. Prop. 30. Spinoza here, as elsewhere, uses *debet* in the sense of *must*, as implying logical necessity. Thus he begins the demonstration of this proposition with saying; "Idea vera debet convenire cum suo ideato."

I add the forty-seventh proposition of the Second Part (p. 120.): "Mens humana adæquatam habet cognitionem æternæ et infinitæ essentiæ Dei."

naturatam) not to *causal Nature* (nec vero ad naturantem.)*

This ascribing of intellect to *phenomenal* and not to *causal Nature* is a main point in the system of Spinoza; and from ignorance of it, or inattention to it, I suppose his doctrine concerning God to have been often misunderstood. I shall, therefore, produce other passages to the same effect as that just quoted.

"Will and intellect have the same relation to God as motion and rest, and generally as all natural phenomena (*omnia naturalia*), which are necessarily determined by God to exist and operate in a certain manner."†

"Will does not more pertain to the nature of God than other natural phenomena, but has the same relation to it as motion and rest, and as all other natural phenomena."†

That is, will and intellect may be affirmed of God, only as motion and rest may be affirmed of him; that is, only of God considered as *Natura naturata*, phenomenal Nature.

In the Second Part of his Ethics, there are many passages, that involve the main idea of the following.

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* Ethices P. I. Prop. 31., p. 62.

† Ibid. Prop. 32. Coroll. 2., pp. 63, 64.

"A knowledge of whatever takes place in the human mind necessarily exists in God, so far as he constitutes the nature of the human mind." *

Though the expression of the following is in some respects obscure, it is clear as regards our present purpose.

"It appears that our mind, considered as intelligent, is an eternal mode of thought, which is limited by another eternal mode of thought, and that again by another, and thus to infinity, so that, altogether, they [that is, human minds, or minds like the human,] constitute the eternal and infinite intellect of God." †

"I think," he says, in a letter to his disciple de Vries, "that I have clearly and evidently shown that intellect, though infinite, belongs to *phenomenal* and not to *causal Nature*." ‡

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* P. II. Prop. 12. Demonstr., p. 88. Conf. Prop. 11. Coroll.; Prop. 38. Demonstr.; Prop. 40. Demonstr.; Prop. 43. Demonstr; P. III. Prop. 1. Demonstr.

† "Hæc sunt, quæ de Mente, quatenus sine relatione ad Corporis existentiam consideratur, ostendere constitueram: ex quibus et simul ex Prop. 21. p. 1. et aliis apparet, quod Mens nostra, quatenus intelligit, æternus cogitandi modus sit, qui alio æterno cogitandi modo determinatur et hic iterum ab alio et sic in infinitum; ita ut omnes simul Dei æternum et infinitum intellectum constituant." — P. V. Prop. 40. Schol., p. 297.

‡ "Quod autem ad rem attinet, puto me satis clare et evidenter demonstrasse, intellectum, quamvis infinitum, ad Naturam natu-

There is no doubt, therefore, that Spinoza denies to his God, considered as the cause of all things, both intellect and will. I shall now state his further positions concerning God, so considered.

All phenomena in the universe are the result of an inevitable necessity; of the necessary operation of the laws of the divine Nature, or, in other words, of causal Nature. Nothing could be otherwise than as it is.* Spinoza, himself, does not explain what are the laws of this Nature, divested of intellect and will. But there is only one answer which the question admits. They must be the laws according to which the phenomena of the universe actually are produced; that is, what we call the laws of nature; — these laws being supposed to have intrinsic power, and the laws of the moral world to act with as inevitable necessity as the laws of the physical.

With these principles, Spinoza proceeds to deny that there is any benevolent purpose in Nature, that his God proposes to himself any purpose, or that there is any plan in the uni-

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ratam, non vero ad naturantem pertinere." — Epist. 27. Opp. I. p. 524.

* Ethices P. I. Prop. 33, pp. 64 seqq.

verse.* These suppositions would evidently be wholly irreconcilable with his principles. "Men commonly suppose," he says, "that all things in nature act for some end, like themselves; and even maintain, as indubitable, that God himself directs all things to some certain end." † He first undertakes to explain the origin of this prejudice, and then to prove its falsity. "The prejudice," he says, "has become a superstition, and struck its roots deep into men's minds. Hence every one strives earnestly to understand and trace out the final causes of all things. But in endeavouring to show that nature does nothing in vain, (that is, nothing but for the use of men,) they seem to have shown only that nature and the Gods are as foolish as men." ‡ He commences his second head by saying; "Not many words are necessary to show, that Nature proposes to itself no end, and that all final causes are nothing but human figments." §

"The opinion of those who subject all things," to what Spinoza calls "a certain indifferent will of God, and maintain that all things depend on his good pleasure, is less wide from the truth," he says, "than that of those who main-

* P. I. Appendix, pp. 68–76. Conf. P. IV. Præf., pp. 200, 201.
† Appendix, p. 69. ‡ Ibid. p. 70. § Ibid. p. 71.

tain that God does all things with reference to good." *

This is the system which I called atheism; but which the writer of the pamphlet, doubtless through a mistake of its character, affirms, that "no one who understands the subject will accuse of an irreligious tendency, it being religious even to mysticism;"† and which Cousin, whom he regards as an authority, describes as "a mystic hymn, an ejaculation of the soul toward the Supreme Being."‡

A few remarks remain to be made on the statements in the pamphlet, concerning this subject.

The system of Spinoza cannot be understood without understanding the meaning of the terms in which he defines the causality ascribed by him to that substance which he calls God. A knowledge of the meaning of these terms is as necessary to comprehend him, as a knowledge of the terms *sine* and *tangent* in studying the properties of the circle. I have already explained them. "God," according to Spinoza, "is the immanent cause of all things, not a transi-

* P. I. Prop. 33. Schol. 2, p. 67. † Pamphlet, p. 126.
‡ Ibid. p. 130.

tive cause;" * that is, a cause acting on itself, and not one producing, or acting on, any thing out of itself. This proposition is quoted by the writer of the pamphlet with the insertion of two other epithets (not in the original †) in the following terms: "God is the permanent and indwelling cause of all things, not the transient and temporary cause." ‡ By translating *immanens*, "indwelling," its essential meaning is changed. An *indwelling* cause acts on something not itself, — that in which it dwells. A common acquaintance with the Latin language might not have prevented the writer from rendering *immanens* by "indwelling"; but it might, as one would think, have prevented his giving "transient," as the meaning of *transiens*. By these two errors, and by the insertion of the epithets "permanent" and "temporary," he makes Spinoza affirm, what no Christian theist will controvert, that "God is the permanent and indwelling cause of all things;" and to deny, what surely was never maintained, "that God

* "Deus est omnium rerum causa immanens; non vero transiens." — P. I. Prop. 18, p. 54.

† These additional epithets are as little to be found in the 21st of Spinoza's Epistles, from which also the writer of the pamphlet (p. 123) professes to quote them.

‡ Pamphlet, p. 122.

is the transient and temporary cause of all things." This fundamental error appears not only in his professed rendering from the Latin of Spinoza; but, what I cannot account for, in a professed translation from the German.*

In my Discourse I mentioned an account which Le Clerc says he had from a person of credit who had stated to him the fact in writing. The writer of the pamphlet says, respecting it,

"The idle story which you quote from Le Clerc, that Meyer induced Spinoza to substitute the word God for Nature, where the former now appears, is without foundation. Even if it had more satisfactory external evidence for its support, it would be contradicted by the whole spirit of Spinoza's writings. The substitution of the word Nature for God could not now be made without destroying his system."†

This passage is hardly important enough for notice. But the following extract may throw some further light on the opinions of Spinoza.

"I have shown," he says, "in the Appendix ‡ to my First Part, that Nature does not act for any end. For that eternal and infinite being which we call God or Nature acts by the same necessity by which it exists." — "The reason, therefore, or cause, why God or Nature acts,

* Pamphlet, p. 129. † Ibid. p. 123.

‡ See the citations from this Appendix, before given, p. 19.

and why it exists, is one and the same. As it exists for the sake of no end, so it acts for the sake of no end." *

Any further quotation to show the error of the writer of the pamphlet would be superfluous. What has been before said is, indeed, sufficient to make it evident.

It is not necessary to go through his remarks in order to particularize other misconceptions of the system of Spinoza; but there is one professed extract from him of a character not to be passed over without notice. The following is given as a quotation from Spinoza.

"The intelligence and will which we should regard as constituting the essence of God, must differ entirely from human intelligence and will. The intelligence of God, so far as it is conceived as constituting the essence of God, is indeed the cause both of the essence and of the existence of the Universe. The intelligence of God, then, is the cause both of the essence and the existence of our intelligence; and must therefore differ from it, as that which is caused differs from its cause, namely, in that which it receives from its cause.† "

* "Ostendimus enim in Primæ Partis Appendice Naturam propter finem non agere; æternum namque illud et infinitum Ens, quod Deum seu Naturam appellamus, eadem, qua existit, necessitate agit." — "Ratio igitur, seu causa, cur Deus, seu Natura agit et cur existit, una eademque est. Ut ergo nullius finis causa existit, nullius etiam finis causa agit." — Ethices P. IV. Præfatio, p. 200.

† Ethica, pars i. prop. xvii." Pamphlet, pp. 124, 125.

This passage, which is adduced to prove that Spinoza ascribes intelligence and will to God, is composed of sentences, altered from the original, which have been taken from a portion of his work before referred to, in which he says, "I will show, that neither intellect nor will belong to the nature of God," * and then proceeds in his proof of this proposition. I will explain, as far as is necessary, the course of his argument, and show how the passage is constructed, which is given as an extract from him.

"If intellect and will belong to the eternal essence of God," says Spinoza, reasoning against the supposition, "something must be understood by each attribute different from what men commonly mean. *For the intellect and will which would constitute the essence of God must differ entirely from our intellect and will;* nor can there be any correspondence between them except in name; that is, no other correspondence than exists between the constellation called the Dog, and a dog a barking animal; which I will thus prove." †

The words italicized being part of a passage

* P. I. Prop. 17. Schol., pp. 52–54. See before, p. 13.
† Ibid. p. 53.

in which Spinoza is laboring to prove, that we cannot ascribe intellect and will to the Deity in any intelligible sense of the words; that is, that we cannot reasonably ascribe them to the Deity at all, is thus quoted, with an interpolation, in the pamphlet before us, as expressing his opinion, that we should ascribe intelligence and will to the Deity.

"The intelligence and will which *we should regard* as constituting the essence of God, must differ entirely from human intelligence and will."

After the words which I have last quoted from Spinoza, he thus proceeds to the proof of what he had affirmed in those words. I shall give this proof in an abridged form.

"If intellect, says Spinoza, "belongs to the divine nature," then, "as God is prior in causality to all things," all things are what they are because the conceptions of them, such as they are, existed in the divine intellect. "*Consequently the intellect of God, so far as it is conceived of as constituting his essence, is truly the cause of things, both of their essence and existence;* which seems to have been observed by those, who have asserted that the intellect, will, and power of God are one and the same." But "*an effect*," he continues, "*differs from its*

*cause precisely in that which it has from its cause.*" I omit his argument in proof of this strange proposition, as foreign from our purpose. But having, as he conceives, established it, he goes on. "*But the intellect of God,*" (according to the supposition that intellect belongs to God,) "*is the cause of the essence and existence of our intellect, therefore the intellect of God,* so far as it is conceived of as constituting the divine essence, *differs from our intellect,* both as respects its essence and its existence; and can correspond with it in nothing but in name. Which it was my purpose to prove. The same reasoning, as every one will readily see, applies to will," as ascribed to God.

Here the argument concludes. It was of course the purpose of Spinoza to prove the proposition which he had laid down at its commencement, that "neither intellect nor will belong to the Divine Nature." I have again italicized the passages which go to form the last two sentences of the professed quotation from Spinoza given in the pamphlet. Words, it will appear, have been put together, so as to make him express the direct opposite of that for which he is contending.

The account which I have given of the system of Spinoza may be of some interest, as almost

every one has heard of his name. There are few writers, — none, perhaps, of the same period, — who have had so much influence upon the infidel philosophy and theology of Germany.

As respects the authors, whose opinions concerning his system the writer of the pamphlet has quoted, there is none of them, even including Tennemann, whom, for myself, I should regard as an authority on the subject. I have not examined the quotations to see whether they are correctly made; and this is a point, which, as may appear from what has been already shown, is not to be assumed.

I proceed to what is said by the writer of the pamphlet respecting

SCHLEIERMACHER.

His remarks relate to my account of Schleiermacher's "Discourses on Religion." In the passage * on which he comments, I have given a brief abstract of some of the more remarkable positions in that work, — positions which appeared to me, as they must to every Christian, wholly irreligious. The only proper answer to

* Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity, pp. 43 seqq.

my account, supposing that it admitted of an answer, would be to compare it with the book itself, and to show, that what I affirmed that book to contain was not to be found in it. But this is not attempted. No error in my account is specified. The most obnoxious of the doctrines which I have mentioned are unequivocally taught in Schleiermacher's work. Should any one expressly assert the contrary, it would be of little consequence what he might afterward assert or deny. Nor, if the book were easily accessible in English, would any one venture to make such remarks on my account of it as are found in the pamphlet under notice. Those doctrines are not inculcated incidentally or apart, so as not to enter into the main purpose of the author. It would be absurd to suppose this of a work, treating only of religion, and in which the Discourse, that all my quotations were taken from, treats "Of the Essence of Religion."* On the contrary, they are characteristic features of the system of pantheism developed in the work. The writer of the pamphlet, indeed, indirectly asserts in one passage, that I am in error in charging Schleiermacher with denying the doctrines of a personal God, and personal im-

* Its title is "Ueber das Wesen der Religion."



mortality.* I made no charge of this kind against him, except by simply reporting what is found in his Discourses. Any error I committed must be in this report. His words imply, therefore, that I committed an error in quoting what Schleiermacher says of a personal God and personal immortality; but I trust I do him (whoever he may be) no more than justice, when I say, that his words imply what he would not directly assert.

The views of religion given in Schleiermacher's book I adduced as exhibiting a system drawn up by a professed Christian, and left it to my readers to judge what resemblance they bore to Christianity. Of the author, or his opinions, I gave no further account, except that I classed him with unbelievers in Christianity as a miraculous revelation. If I correctly stated the doctrines maintained in his Discourses, every reader can determine for himself whether or not he is to be regarded as a Christian, in a proper sense of the word.

It may seem, therefore, as if nothing more were to be said on the subject. But the writer of the pamphlet, without directly denying the

* "You charge the author with denying the doctrine both of a personal God and of personal immortality. You were probably led into this error," &c.—Pamphlet, p. 135.

correctness of my account of Schleiermacher's work, introduces a series of remarks and assertions, the purport of which is to produce the impression, that I have in some way misrepresented him; that he was a "strenuous advocate of the supernatural origin of Christianity;" that "his whole life was a controversy against the Rationalist school,"* and that he was a believer "in a perfect revelation through Christ," to which "the revelation of God in nature, and in the human soul, is only a preparation."† Of these remarks and assertions, it is necessary to my purpose to take some notice.

"You attempt," says the writer of the pamphlet, "to support your allegations by the citation of detached passages from one of Schleiermacher's earliest writings, without the qualifications which guard them where they stand, and without any reference to his subsequent productions, in which his theological views are more fully and distinctly expressed. In this way, you have presented an erroneous idea of his position as a theologian, and treated with injustice the character of one of the most sincere and exemplary men, who have ever devoted their lives to the service of truth."‡

If by "detached passages" the writer of the pamphlet means passages expressive of doctrines that do not enter as fundamental propositions

* Pamphlet, p. 139. † Ibid. p. 142. ‡ Ibid. pp. 131, 132.

into the system of Schleiermacher, what he states is a grave error. Of what qualifications or explanations such doctrines may admit, it would be hard to conjecture, and he nowhere throws any light on the subject. I shall have occasion hereafter to recur to it. At present, I shall take notice only of the representation, that the "Discourses on Religion" were one of Schleiermacher's earliest writings, and, therefore, as is implied, that it is unjust to quote them in evidence of his settled opinions.

It might be sufficient to say, that I entered into no history of Schleiermacher's opinions, and quoted his Discourses only to show what sort of a substitute had been proposed for Christianity. But a further answer is to be given. The facts respecting the book are these. It was originally published in 1799, when the author was thirty years old. In 1806, a second edition appeared, in the Dedication of which the author professes to have revised it throughout, for the purpose, among others, of removing all occasion for the gross misunderstandings to which it had been exposed, causing him to be represented as a fanatic by infidels, and an unbeliever by bigots. In 1821, a third edition was published, again revised, with many changes of expression, and accompanied

with copious notes, to explain more fully the writer's opinions. And in 1831, three years before his death, a fourth edition was issued, being that which I used. In the Preface to the third edition, (which is retained, without any additional notice, in the fourth,) he again refers to "the numerous and in part very wonderful misconceptions" of his meaning, and to the consequent charges of atheism and mysticism, which had been brought against him, "almost in the same breath." He had likewise been charged with inconsistency between this and his other writings. But he says, that his "mode of thinking on the subjects in question had remained unchanged (since the publication of the work), except that, with years, it had acquired greater maturity and clearness in its form." It is unnecessary to say any thing further respecting the implication, that this work should not be used in evidence of his opinions, because it is one of his earliest writings.

But there are other reasons given, why it should not be thus used. They occupy several pages,* but they are not stated clearly, nor brought definitely to bear on the point for which they are alleged. I was mistaken, it is

* Pamphlet, pp. 132 seqq.

said, in regarding the work as elaborate or systematic. "Nothing could have been further from the author's intention, than to present any thing like an elaborate or complete system of speculative doctrine." It is "filled with bursts of impassioned eloquence," — "expressly disclaiming all pretensions to an exposition of doctrine." I have fallen into "a misapprehension of the design of the book," which "an accurate knowledge of the literary history of the period, in which it was written, would have prevented." And the inference to be made is, that, if I had understood the occasion, design, and character of the work, I should not have made use of it as I have done. It is admitted by his admirer, Lücke, and, one would suppose, admitted by the writer of the pamphlet, for he quotes Lücke's words as if adopting them, that it does present "the appearance of pantheism, and here and there a decided expression of it"; * and I repeat, that it does teach the other connected doctrines, which I have formerly stated. But it is alleged, that, when it was first written, infidelity generally prevailed in Germany, and what there was of religion was of the poorest kind. The author "felt himself

* Pamphlet, p. 136.

impelled to go forth" — "for the restoration of religion; to present it in its most sublime aspect, free from its perversions, disentangled from human speculation, as founded in the essential nature of man, and indispensable to the complete unfolding of his inward being."* And, therefore, — for this is the conclusion which the writer of the pamphlet is maintaining, — the book is not to be taken for an exposition of his opinions concerning religion. "In order to recognise every thing which is really religion among men, and to admit even the lowest degrees of it into the idea of religion, he wished to make this as broad and comprehensive in its character as possible."† And, therefore, when he asserts the doctrine of personal immortality to be an irreligious doctrine, and maintains, that religion consists only in the sense of the union of the individual with the One and All, we must regard him as but striving to make the idea of religion as broad and comprehensive in its character as possible.

But the main argument against the use made by me of Schleiermacher's book, — an argument, however, rather implied than expressly stated, — is, that the doctrines I quoted from it are explained in the notes to the third edi-

* Pamphlet, p. 133. † Ibid.

tion. To complete the argument, it must be understood, that they are so explained as to give his language a sense different from what appears at first sight. Schleiermacher was skilled, when he so wished, to obscure his meaning, and to palter with words used in senses very remote from their common import. It has been said, that the signification of his name, Schleiermacher, that is *Veil-maker*, expressed his character. But I do not perceive, that he explains away, in those notes, what I quoted from his text; — a text, which, as it appears in the third and fourth editions, was in the most obnoxious passages carefully revised, with various alterations and softenings of expression. Had such a process been carried on, as the writer of the pamphlet represents; had Schleiermacher taught irreligion in his text, and explained it into religion in his notes, the readers of the pamphlet might reasonably have desired to see some specimens of his manner of interpretation. I will quote what is said concerning the subject in the following very remarkable passage, which I give with the *capitals* used by the writer of the pamphlet.

"I regret, that the explanations referred to are of such a length as to forbid their insertion in this place. It may be seen, however, from the following extract,

that the conceptions which Schleiermacher renounces as essential " [the sense obviously requires " unessential "] "to religion, are only those which are taken from human and earthly relations, and which consequently pervert every spiritual idea of God and immortality. 'As the conception of the HUMAN personality of God usually presupposes a consciousness that is not morally pure, the same thing may be assumed in the conception of immortality, which represents it after the manner of the Elysian fields, only as a new earth of greater beauty and extent. And as we must admit an essential difference between the inability to form such a HUMAN and PERSONAL conception of God,' [*verbally*, "to conceive of God as in such manner personal,"] 'and the denial of the existence of a LIVING GOD, — which last alone can be designated as atheism ; in like manner, he who does not incline to such a MATERIAL CONCEPTION of immortality, is very far from discarding the GENUINE HOPE of immortality. And as we may call every man religious, who believes in a LIVING GOD, we may also call every one religious, who believes in the EVERLASTING LIFE OF THE SOUL, without wishing to define the way or the manner, in which it must be conceived.'* "

Schleiermacher, then, was a believer in the Living God, and in everlasting life. He had a just view of the importance of these doctrines. He regarded them as essential to religion. His only purpose was, to free them from debasing conceptions derived from things human and earthly. But this is directly contradictory to

"* Reden, p. 141." Pamphlet, pp. 137, 138.

my statements concerning the opinions maintained by him in the book in question. What account is to be given of the matter?

The account to be given is, that language cannot be used more deceptively than it is in the passage I have quoted from the pamphlet. The impression which every unsuspecting reader must receive is, that Schleiermacher regarded the personality of the Deity as a fundamental truth of religion. He denied, indeed, his *human* personality. The phrase may not be well understood, but if trust be reposed in the writer of the pamphlet, it will be thought to mean, that Schleiermacher, maintaining the personality of God, only rejected certain erroneous conceptions connected with it, founded upon some supposed analogy to human imperfection. To one who examines for himself, and attends closely to the meaning of words, it will indeed be evident, that personality is but of one kind, admitting no modifications or degrees; that the word must have the same meaning, whether used of man, or an angel, or the Divinity; that consequently to deny *human* personality to God, or personality like that of man, is to deny a personal God; and that, in the phrase "human personality," if the qualifying word "human" have any meaning, and be not merely used as a

disguise, it must be intended to imply, that personality, so far as our knowledge extends, is the attribute only of finite beings, like man. Three pages before the passage quoted from him, Schleiermacher says; "As it is so difficult to conceive of a personality truly infinite and impassible, a great difference should be made between a personal God and a living God. It is the latter conception alone, which properly forms a separation from *material* pantheism and blind atheistic necessity."* In his Discourses, (as I have formerly mentioned,) both in the text and notes, he reasons against the supposition, that the belief of a personal God is essential to religion. I will add but one quotation, to show further his views on the subject.

"I am firmly convinced, that, through what has been said, the conception of the personality of God will not become more uncertain to any one who holds it, nor will any one be better able to free himself from the almost unalterable necessity of adopting it for his own, because he knows why he lies under this necessity. Among truly religious men there never have been zealots, enthusiasts, or fanatics for this conception; and, so far as by atheism is meant, as is often the case, nothing more than a shrinking back

* Reden über die Religion, p. 138.

from it, and doubt concerning it, a truly pious man will regard the charge with great tranquillity."*

But, it may be asked, does not the passage at least prove, that Schleiermacher, at the time of writing it, regarded the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, in the common sense of the words, as an essential doctrine of religion? I answer, that Schleiermacher, by the term, "the everlasting life of the soul," expresses a conception, which would never enter the mind of a reader unacquainted with his use of it. Religion, according to him, consisting in the renouncing of personality and the blending of the individual with the One and All, the pious man, in his union with the Infinite and Eternal, enjoys while on earth everlasting life; and this notion of everlasting life he puts in direct contrast with that commonly entertained.

"I believe," he says in his Discourses, "that I have fully set before you the manner in which every pious person bears about in himself an unchangeable and eternal existence. For when our feeling cleaves to nothing individual, but embraces as its sole object our relation to God, in which all that is individual and perishable is swallowed up, then is there nothing

* Ibid., p. 117.

perishable in it, but only what is eternal; and it may truly be said, that the religious life is that in which we have already sacrificed and renounced all that is mortal, and actually enjoy immortality. But the manner in which most men conceive of immortality, and their longing after it, appear to me irreligious, and directly contrary to the spirit of piety. Nay, their wish to be immortal has no other ground than an aversion to what is the aim of religion." The great aim of religion, he goes on to say, (as I formerly explained his doctrine,) is the divesting ourselves of our personality, and the becoming one with the Infinite. But those, he proceeds, who receive the common doctrine of immortality, struggle against this; "they are anxiously concerned about their personality; and thus, far from being willing to seize their only opportunity to rise superior to it, — that afforded them by death, — they are anxious how they shall take it with them beyond this life; and aspire, at most, for eyes of wider vision and better limbs. But God speaks to them, as it is written, 'He who loses his life for my sake shall save it, and he who would save it shall lose it.' The life which they would preserve is one not to be preserved." — "The more they long after an immortality which is none, and which they are

not even capable of conceiving, (for who can succeed in the effort to represent to himself an existence in time as eternal?) the more they lose of that immortality which they might ever possess, and lose with it this mortal life, by indulging thoughts, that cause vain anxiety and distress."*—"The aim and character of a re-

* Schleiermacher, as I have said, knew how to *mock with some lip-phrase;* and, conformably to this, he here introduces a passage, which it is proper to quote.

"He who has learned to be more than himself, knows that he loses little, when he loses himself. Only he, who, thus renouncing himself, has become blended, as far as in his power, with the whole Universe, and in whose soul a greater and holier desire has sprung up, — only he has a right to, and only with him may there really be, any further discourse of those hopes which death gives us, and of the immortality to which we may infallibly raise ourselves through it."

It would be idle to inquire, what hopes and what immortality Schleiermacher would hold out to a being whose personal existence is to cease with death.

An expression which I have used above, in connexion with the whole subject, brings to my mind a passage of touching beauty from a late poem.

"Is it a boon, when Dissolution's strife
Hangs — trembling — o'er the bed of Child or Wife,
And the fond Sufferer turns amid her pain,
And looks, and strives to say, 'We meet again;'
Is it a boon to stand in anguish by,
And meet with some lip-phrase that clinging eye,
While the sad Skeptic Heart makes no reply?
Or, bending o'er the tomb to which she sank,
Present to feel — and Future — one mere Blank!"

KENYON'S *Rhymed Plea for Tolerance.*

ligious life is not such an immortality, as many wish for and believe in; — or, perhaps, only pretend to believe in; for their desire to know too much of it makes their belief very suspicious; — not that immortality which is out of time and after time, or rather only after the present time, yet still in time; but the immortality which already, in this temporal life, we may immediately possess, and which is a problem, in the solution of which we are continually engaged. In the midst of finiteness to become one with the Infinite, and to be eternal in every moment, — that is the immortality of religion." *

Such is the conclusion of one of Schleiermacher's Discourses on Religion. In his note upon the passage I have quoted, he says, "I wish nothing more, than that every man may see himself not only divested of all the foreign apparel, for which he is indebted to the outward circumstances of life, but also after having laid aside these pretensions to an endless existence, in order that he may determine, when he regards himself such as he really is, whether these pretensions be any thing more, than such a title as the Mighty of the Earth often deck themselves with, to countries which they have never possessed, nor will possess." †

* Reden über die Religion, pp. 118 – 121. † Ibid., p. 141.

This last extract occurs about half a dozen lines before the passage of Schleiermacher, which is quoted in the pamphlet to prove that he cherished the Christian's hope of immortality.

Alike deceptive with the paragraph on which I have remarked, is another, in which the writer of the pamphlet professes to give a general account of Schleiermacher's opinions respecting Christianity.

"According to Schleiermacher, the revelation of God in nature, and in the human soul, is only a preparation for a perfect revelation through Christ. The purpose of God in the creation of man is completed in the Christian revelation. This is a new, original communication of divine truth, a fresh manifestation of the divine life in the person and works of Jesus Christ. He is appointed by God to be the Redeemer of the world; hence he needed not redemption himself; and, agreeably to the universal doctrine of the Church, was originally distinguished from all other men, and endowed with divine power from his birth." — p. 142.

After the explanations already given of Schleiermacher's opinions, and the proofs that have been set forth, of the manner in which the pamphlet is written, it is not necessary to go to any length in remarking upon this paragraph. It may be sufficient to compare it with what has been already said. But I will add a few more illustrations of Schleiermacher's opinions. The passage naturally conveys the impression, that

he believed in the Christian revelation in the common sense of the words; in a miraculous revelation of God, through Christ, of the fundamental truths of religion. With this impression, may be compared the following passages from him.

"What is a miracle?" "A miracle is but the religious name for an event. Every one, the most natural and the most common, if it be of such a character, that it may be prevailingly viewed under a religious aspect, is a miracle. To me, all is miracle; and in your sense, as meaning something inexplicable and strange, only that is a miracle which is none in mine." *

In his note on this passage,† added in the third edition, he says:

"The expression, that a *miracle* is but the religious name for an event in general, and thus, that all that happens is a miracle, may readily fall under the suspicion of being intended for a direct denial of any thing miraculous; for, to be sure, if every thing is a miracle, then, on the other hand, nothing is a miracle."

The explanation of Schleiermacher is, that the distinction between the events which we call, and those which we do not call, miracles, is founded, not on any intrinsic difference, but

* Reden über die Religion, p. 105. † Ibid., p. 135.

solely on the manner in which they are regarded by the human mind; that, if we regard an event in immediate relation to the power of God, by which it is produced, that event is to us a miracle; that, if we regard it as occurring in the ordinary course of nature, it is not a miracle. With these views, he says, that, in his "Doctrines of Faith," "notwithstanding the denial of absolute [proper] miracles, the religious interest in the miraculous is regarded and protected."

Revelation, in its religious sense, Schleiermacher explains to mean "every original and new communication of the universe, and of its inmost life, to man." * He who has not such revelations, "he who does not for himself see miracles from the point of view whence he contemplates the world," "who does not, in the most important moments, feel, with the most vivid conviction, that he is under the control of a divine spirit, and that he speaks and acts from a holy inspiration; or who, at least, (for less than this is nothing,) is not conscious of his feelings as immediate influences of the universe, so as to recognise something peculiar in them that cannot be from imitation, but is a pledge of their pure source in his inmost nature, — he has no re-

* Ibid., pp. 105, 106.

ligion. To know one's self to be possessed of this, is the true faith. On the contrary, what is commonly called faith, the reception of what another has said or done, the being willing to think over and feel over again what another has thought and felt, is a hard and unworthy service; and instead of being, as men dream, what is highest in religion, must be discarded by every one who would penetrate into its sanctuary. To have and to hold such an imitative faith proves, that a man is incapable of religion; to seek his religion from others proves, that one does not understand what it is." Men must "stand on their own feet, go their own way," and "hearken to themselves," though, "with the exception of a few, select individuals, they need a guide and an exciter to awaken their sense of religion from its first slumber, and give it its first direction." Being thus awakened, "every one must then see, with his own eyes, and himself bring a contribution to the treasures of religion, or he deserves no place in her kingdom, and has none. Ye are right in thinking meanly of those poor repeaters of others' sayings, who derive their religion wholly from another, or attach themselves to the dead letter of a book, swear by it, and bring their proofs from it." *

* Reden über die Religion, pp. 107, 108.

I might adduce more to the same purpose. But what has been quoted can leave no intelligent man in doubt concerning Schleiermacher's opinions. He regarded that as no genuine religion which rests on external support, on faith in the revelation from God through Christ. The religious man, according to him, sees miracles for himself, has his own revelations, and his own inspiration. He needs no instructer, no external assurance of truth. Religion cannot be taught. To seek it from another proves that one knows not what it is.

I have thus, as far as the occasion required or admitted, given some account of the opinions of one, in whose works the writer of the pamphlet says, that "our studious young men, if they are inclined to German Rationalism, will find a corrective;" * and of whom he adds, that "there are many who will welcome the principles of his school as the vital, profound, and ennobling theology which they have earnestly sought for, but hitherto sought in vain." †

One more charge of error respecting Schleiermacher remains to be noticed.

In the first note to my Discourse,‡ I have

* Pamphlet, p. 140. † Ib. p. 149. ‡ p. 45.

said, incidentally, for the purpose of explaining a quotation, that "the disciples of the new school are in Germany called Rationalists or Naturalists." The term *Rationalist* occurs nowhere else, either in my Discourse, or in the notes to it. But the author of the pamphlet represents me as having committed an "extraordinary error," a "whimsical mistake," in having classed Schleiermacher with Rationalists or Naturalists. "He was," says the writer, "a strenuous advocate of the supernatural origin of Christianity." *

It is unnecessary to add any thing to the evidence already adduced, to show how deceived a reader would be, who should understand these words in their ordinary sense and implication.

"His whole life," says the writer of the pamphlet, "was a controversy against the Rationalist school." The writer quotes Röhr, a Rationalist, to prove his "hatred to Rationalism," and Lücke, (whom he calls orthodox,) to show that it received from him "a deadly wound." †

These statements are adapted to lead the readers of the pamphlet to suppose, that Schleiermacher was a strenuous defender of

* Pamphlet, pp. 138, 139. † Ibid., p. 139.

Christianity as a miraculous revelation (in the proper sense of the words), and a zealous opponent of those who denied its claims to divine authority. The writer would be understood as using the word *Rationalist* in its widest acceptation, as equivalent to *Naturalist*, (with which term I connected it,) that is, as denoting one who, rejecting revelation, founds his faith on natural religion. But, in the quotations from Röhr and Lücke, it is used in a restricted sense, to denote those holding the principles, and retaining the character, of the *earlier* German Rationalists, to whom the name was first given; and Schleiermacher's controversy with them was consistent, as I am about to show, with his having as little belief as they had in the divine authority of our religion.

Speaking of De Wette, the writer of the pamphlet says:

"I ought not, perhaps, to leave this topic, without showing the injustice you have been guilty of, in classing De Wette with the Naturalist school. To do this, I should need only to adduce passages from almost any one of his writings; but I am spared the task, by the careful and discriminating account of De Wette's theology, which is already before the public in one of our religious Journals [The Christian Examiner]."—pp. 153, 154.

Before meeting with this reference, I was not

aware of the existence of such an account. But it has been a convenience to me to be referred to it, as affording an undisputed authority, and one which, *so far as I shall quote it*, I believe to be essentially correct.

De Wette says, as translated in this article : *

"It is not long since Jacobi, Fries, and Schleiermacher have discovered this truth, and it is by far from being universally acknowledged, that faith lies originally in feeling, is nothing but feeling brought forth into clear consciousness. These men were the first who pointed out in the human mind an original principle, a faith or religious feeling, which precedes every perception of the understanding, and they therefore assigned to every such perception a subordinate place. The penetrating Hamann alone had earlier indicated the same principle."

Of the controversy between this school and that of the earlier Rationalists, De Wette gives the following account.†

"The opposite party, the Rationalists, most violently oppose the doctrine of the origin of religion in feeling, and on the ground, that they deduce every thing in religion from the understanding, and judge all truths by the understanding merely. They mark our doctrine with the opprobrious name of Mysticism. We are very well

* Christian Examiner, for May, 1838, p. 155.
† Ibid., p. 163.

satisfied with this name, if it is taken in its original signification. Mystic means mysterious, sacred to or significant of him initiated into mysteries, belonging to mystery. According to what we deem the just view, there is in the human mind something dark and mysterious, accessible only to the faithful heart, and from which the clear light of the understanding is excluded; this view may be called Mysticism. In general, every feeling is mystical, because that as such it cannot be clearly conceived of; a doctrine, therefore, which places religion in feeling, may be well called mystical. But if those are called Mystics, who, disinclined to clearness of understanding, withdraw religion from all free investigation and scientific treatment, and would surrender themselves utterly to obscure feelings, then we justly refuse this epithet, since we, quite as much as the boasted Rationalists, are champions of free thinking on all subjects of faith. We distinguish ourselves from these theologians, in that we do not, like them, regard the perceptive understanding or critical intellect as the fountain of religion, nor as the highest aim of religious culture, but deem it subordinate to feeling."

This was the point at issue between the "Mystics," including Schleiermacher, and the earlier Rationalists. But whether religion is to be founded upon the understanding alone, or the feelings alone, whether its truths are only to be reasoned out, or only to be felt out, the authority of revelation, as teaching the fundamental facts of religion, is equally rejected.

I have not remarked on every thing in the ac-

count of Schleiermacher given in the pamphlet, that may lead the reader into error; for it would have been trifling and wearisome to do so; but enough, I trust, has been said to show what degree of confidence may be reposed in the representations of the writer. In the conclusion of his account, he quotes various passages from Ullmann, whose religious character I suppose to be different from that of Schleiermacher, to prove what Schleiermacher believed, by showing what Ullmann believes. It must be obvious to every one, that if the writer had been able to produce any thing to his purpose from Schleiermacher's own writings, he would not have had recourse to such indirect evidence.

I now come to the criticisms of the writer of the pamphlet on my translations from

DE WETTE.*

These criticisms he regards as likely to affect my reputation seriously. He asserts, that in twenty-one lines, I have committed fourteen errors; but, as he specifies only those in four passages, it is only on them I can remark.

* Pamphlet, pp. 149 seqq.



I.

I translated thus: *

— the essence of what is proposed for religious faith "is not in propositions which are *objects of knowledge*, but in *a pious apprehension of things*, purified and enlightened by knowledge." †

The writer of the pamphlet translates: ‡

— "its essence is not in *scientific propositions*, but in the *pious consciousness*, purified and enlightened by the influence of science."

Having quoted the words of De Wette as an example of vague and unmeaning language, I felt myself bound to translate them into as plausible English as I could command. It would have been easy to render the disputed clause verbally thus:

"The essence of the doctrines of faith does not consist in scientific propositions, but in a pious apprehension of things, scientifically purified and enlightened."

And, strange as this sounds in English, I do

* Discourse, pp. 40, 41.

† — "ihr Wesen nicht in wissenschaftlichen Sätzen, sondern in dem wissenschlaftlich gereinigten und erleuchteten frommen Bewusstseyn besteht."

‡ Pamphlet, p. 151.

not know why the original is not as strange in German. But in order to preserve the antithesis with which the sentence concludes, without the baldness of expression, I substituted for "scientific propositions," what I supposed to be, as the words were used, an equivalent term, "propositions which are objects of knowledge." Scientific propositions are propositions which are objects of knowledge; and whether, in changing one term for the other, I did any injustice to De Wette, may be judged of by the following extracts from the article on his theology, before referred to, in the Christian Examiner.

There are, according to De Wette, "three modes of conviction of which man is capable, — *Knowledge*, *Faith*, *Sentiment*." "The second mode of conviction, *faith*, cannot, like the first, be called knowledge, without confounding terms, and designating things opposite by the same name. It is by rising above worldly knowledge, that cannot satisfy us, that we soar to this lofty faith." As for religious *sentiment*, "as soon as it is excited, the reign of actual knowledge ceases, the critical intellect should hold reverent silence." "*Faith* and *sentiment* belong to religion, but positive knowledge is a stranger to it." *

* Christian Examiner, for May, 1838; pp. – 160.

The account, given in the pamphlet, of the manner in which the passage translated is introduced, is altogether a misrepresentation. The two leading ideas by which it is preceded are, that "faith, as such, is free from doubt;" and that, when "we come to treat of convictions concerning what man *sees not and yet believes*, or supernatural objects of faith, doubts enough arise which are opposed to faith."

By way of correcting my translation, the writer of the pamphlet renders the German word *Bewusstsein*, "consciousness." The word has a nebulous meaning, of which that of "consciousness" forms only the nucleus. It comprehends, also, the senses of "perception"; of "reflection," in its metaphysical use; of "intuition"; and of "knowledge," in its stricter sense.* De Wette, in the passage in question,

* It is defined by Heinsius, in his large Dictionary of the German language, which I suppose the best, to be "the state in which a man has knowledge of himself and other things," — "der Zustand, da man sich seiner und anderer Dinge bewusst ist;" and in the Conversations-Lexicon, to be "a knowledge of being," — "Wissen um das Sein." In the latter work, it is said, "The first degree of knowledge (Bewusstsein) is immediate or sensible knowledge (Bewusstsein), the perception (Bewusstsein) of objects, and, in its developement, of the external world;" "Die erste Stufe des Bewusstseins ist das unmittelbare oder sinnliche Bewusstsein, das Bewusstsein der Objecte, und in seiner Ausbildung der Aussenwelt."

Strauss, speaking of the theological system of Horst, one of those

intends by it, I presume, the supposed "feeling," or direct perception, of religious truth, which lies at the foundation of his system. We have no word in English specifically denoting this imaginary faculty, and perhaps the term I used, "apprehension of things," in the connexion in which it stands, comes as near the meaning as any that could have been employed. On the other hand, *consciousness* denotes a "knowledge of what passes in one's own mind," * or a knowledge of the present state of one's own mind. This has been its well-settled, and is, I conceive, its only proper meaning. Taking it in this meaning, it will appear, that De Wette has not gained in clearness or sense by the new translation, which makes him say, that "the essence of the doctrines of faith consists in the pious knowledge of what passes in one's own mind," &c.

I am aware, that in some of the incorrect writing of the day, the word "consciousness"

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symbolical expositions of the history of Christ, which prepared the way for his own, says, (Das Leben Jesu, II. 760,) "Diese Ansicht traf zunächst von Seiten des kirchlichen Bewusstseins der Vorwurf," &c., where *Bewusstsein*, I suppose, may be represented in English by "conception." "On the side of the conception of the Church, this view encountered the objection," &c.

* Locke and Johnson.

has before been used in a wide and vague sense, as it is by the writer of the pamphlet. This has been caused, I think, by the influence of German speculations and phraseology. In the German language, as must be evident to one accustomed to think with precision, the significations of many words are more unsteady and uncertain, than in our own, or in the southern languages of Europe. Their outline is undefined and varying. They have not been determined to precise meanings by habits of accurate usage, and associations long connected with them. They do not, equally as with us, when standing in certain relations to other words and ideas, present invariably and instantaneously the true sense required by the connexion. The associations and implications connected with one signification of a word become confused with those connected with another; and even significations widely distinct are confounded together. Thus, to illustrate from the word immediately before us: — "Consciousness," as properly used, implies certain knowledge; but *Bewusstsein* answers, in one of its meanings, to "consciousness"; in another, it is employed, as we have seen, to denote a supposed faculty of immediately perceiving the facts of religion; and to this supposed faculty,

as being denoted by the same name, the idea of certainty, belonging to the first signification, is transferred. To take another example, equally to our purpose: — The same word in German, *Wunder*, signifies either a *miracle*, or merely a *wonder*, a "wonderful natural object or event"; and the rejection, by the German Naturalists, of the miraculous character of Christianity has been facilitated, perhaps, by nothing more than by the ease with which they could pass from one of these very distinct meanings to the other, on account of their being both expressed by the same word.* But, as I have formerly remarked,† almost all the words expressive of ideas of revealed religion have admitted of being abused in a similar manner; and this abuse, as may be seen by such productions as the pamphlet under notice, is making inroads upon our own language. It is necessary jealously to guard it; or its whole meaning in

* I may give one example from the science of metaphysics. Each of the German words *sinnlich* and *sensual* combines the meanings of "sensible," (that is, "belonging to," or "perceptible by the senses,") and of "sensual"; and these two meanings have been confounded together. It has been attempted to introduce into our language the barbarism of using "sensual," as if it meant sensible, or founded on the senses; and we have heard, in consequence, through a series of errors, of the *sensual* philosophy of Locke.

† Discourse, p. 10.

the higher departments of thought will be broken down, the cultivation and growth of centuries will be destroyed, and it will be reduced to a waste, in which the wildest speculations may flourish. But this is a digression, suggesting many thoughts that cannot be pursued. I must return to smaller matters.

## II.

According to my translation,* De Wette says:

We should not rest "the truth of Christian faith, *as if it were a duty so to do*,† upon common, naked, historical truth."

According to the writer of the pamphlet:

We should not rest "the truth of Christian faith upon common, naked, historical truth, *as if it were a legal title.*" ‡

This sentence, as every one perceives, is, in itself, unintelligible. De Wette, as the writer of the pamphlet remarks, alludes, in the four words in question, (*etwa wie ein recht,*) to what he had said, some pages before, that "the historical faith of Christians, according to the old system, rests on the Bible, very much as the common civil law is founded on the *Corpora*

* Discourse, p. 41.
† — "etwa wie ein Recht."
‡ Pamphlet, p. 152.

*Juris.*" * His full meaning, therefore, would be thus expressed: We should not rest the truth of Christian faith upon common, naked, historical truth; as if it were the duty of a Christian to refer to the history of Christianity to settle his faith, as it is the duty of a lawyer, where the civil law is in use, to refer to the *Corpora Juris* to settle the law. The *allusion* is of no importance, and could not have been expressed intelligibly without substituting an explanation for a proper rendering. The whole essential *meaning* of De Wette is given in my translation.

III.

I rendered De Wette, thus: †

The new rational theology must "renounce what has hitherto been customary, the poor and unscientific appeal to miraculous evidence." ‡

The writer of the pamphlet translates:

—"renounce the miserable and unscientific mode of conducting the argument from miracles, that has hitherto been used." §

The point made is this; that the original of

* Pamphlet, p. 152. † Discourse, p. 42.

‡ "Insbesondere verzichte sie auf die bisher gewöhnliche so kleinliche und unwissenschaftliche Führung des Wunderbeweises."

§ Pamphlet, p. 152.

De Wette, like the latter translation, leaves an opening for the supposition, that he believed, that there was some mode of conducting the argument from miracles, that had *not* "hitherto been used," or rather, that had not "hitherto been customary," by which it might be made available. It did not occur to me, in translating, that this point would be raised by any one, or I might have been more scrupulously literal. A transposition would have saved me from remark. If I had rendered thus: — "to renounce that poor and unscientific appeal to (*verbally*, management of,) miraculous evidence which has hitherto been customary," — my translation would have had all the *verbal ambiguity* of the original. But, whatever equivocal language any expositor of De Wette may employ, it is undeniable, that, according to his views, what we regard as the miraculous evidence of Christianity, is of no value.

The system of De Wette I conceive to be this. The truths of religion are immediately perceived or, as he expresses it, felt by the mind. They need, or rather admit of, no other evidence than this intuitive perception. This alone affords that certainty which is necessary to faith. Faith cannot rest on reasoning, or external testimony, or historical knowledge; for

all these sources of evidence necessarily involve doubt. The connexion between faith and historical Christianity consists in the fact, that the influence and spirit of those truths, which are internally perceived by faith, were perfectly developed in Christ, the pattern, or model, man, the God-man; who founded a community to which he transmitted that influence and spirit, and in which they have continued to be developed. His history is properly no object of religious faith. No new warranty of those truths is given by their having been taught by him. The earlier Christians did not believe them for this reason.* The outline of his history is true; but, as regards the accounts in the Gospels, there is much that is questionable, when critically examined. These accounts are to be regarded rather morally and spiritually, than in their literal meaning. They are to be viewed as symbolical of the *ideal* in religion, by which

* Speaking of the earliest times of Christianity, he says: "The warranty of these truths did not consist in their having been taught by Christ; for how seldom does the Apostle Paul appeal to the declarations of Christ." "A properly historical knowledge and examination of what Christ may have taught belonged not at all to the conditions of the original Christian faith." The last sentence is distinguished as emphatic by the mode of printing in the original. — See the article by De Wette, in Ullmann and Umbreit's Journal, (formerly quoted by me,) pp. 143, 144.

De Wette seems generally to mean the universal truths of religion, or what relates to them. The accounts may thus have abstract truth without historical reality; and, apart from all inquiry into their authenticity, may serve for spiritual edification. The ascription of a symbolical character to the Gospel history is a distinguishing characteristic of the opinions of De Wette; and, in adopting and applying this principle, he is one of the writers who have prepared the way for the extravagances of Strauss, of which I formerly made some mention.* Agreeably to this theory, the miracles of Christ, whether true or not, may be regarded as symbolical. They may be resolved into the *ideal.*

"The original, innocent belief in miracles," † says De Wette, "was nothing but a branch of the moral faith, that a man with purer, diviner power of spirit and life, the pure, ideal man had appeared, — a faith that needed not for its assurance any speculative historical proof, but simply the practical proof from the excitement and direction of life received from him." ‡

I quote another connected passage of some

* Discourse, pp. 46, 47.

† "Der ursprüngliche, unschuldige Wunderglaube."

‡ Article by De Wette, (before quoted,) p. 145.

length, which it would be easy to compress, but which it may be more satisfactory to have in his own words.

"The historical circumstances immediately connected with the death of Christ were but incidental, and were believed more on account of their inward significance, than on account of the outward phenomenon, which, beside, did not demand historical investigation. This was more demanded by the fact of the Resurrection, as being in the highest degree marvellous and incomprehensible. Is one disposed to a physical investigation of it, the question arises respecting the possibility of such a fact, which breaks in upon our theoretical knowledge of the relations of nature. Thus it is known what a stumbling-block it has been in our times; so that the credibility of the event has been subjected to a strict examination, and attempts have been made to prove or disprove its possibility according to the laws of physiology. To this investigation, the first Christians were not disposed; and there are no clear traces, that doubts concerning this wonderful fact were openly avowed, and became a subject of attention. Manifestly in the view of the Apostles, the *ideal* aspect of it was, sometimes at least, the prevailing one, and always a principal con-

sideration. It is known, that the apostle Paul so closely connects the truth of our own resurrection with that of Christ's resurrection, that they must stand or fall together. But if we receive the resurrection of Christ as a physical, historical fact, there is, according to this doctrinal view, so important a difference between it and the general resurrection hoped for, that this connexion ceases to be tenable. For, according to the clear accounts in the Gospels, the body of Christ, after his resurrection, was of an earthly, tangible nature, so that he even took food. But we cannot ascribe such a body to those who rise from the dead, without falling into the grossest contradictions; and Paul himself did not conceive of the body that was to rise as so material. Thus it is clear, that the Apostle regarded the fact of Christ's resurrection, apart from any consideration of the physical, historical *How*, as a pledge of the *ideal* truth, that we shall rise from the dead, and consequently more under its *ideal* than *real* aspect. Accordingly, nothing more remains for pure Christian faith, than that, in the historical experiences of the Apostle concerning Jesus, there was an event which appeared to him the *realization* of the truth of the future resurrection of the good, — a truth which be-

fore had been believed only *ideally*, but was now apprehended *really*.* The inquiry, what was the character of this fact, as regards its physical and historical relations, does not properly belong to the province of Christian faith."†

I suppose every intelligent reader is satisfied, that I did no injustice to De Wette, in representing him as rejecting the miraculous evidence of Christianity. It would be inconsistent, not only with his views of the accounts of miracles in the Gospels, but with what is fundamental in his system, to believe him to attach any value to those accounts, as affording proof of the facts on which religion is founded.

The writer of the pamphlet, however, says:

"You make him say, that the argument from miracles should be renounced; he actually says, that it should not be conducted in the miserable and unscientific mode that has been usual. The importance of this is deeply felt by many theologians beside De Wette. Still they value the miracles, when presented in their true light. They would not renounce all appeal to the evidence derived from them. Neither would De Wette. His writings are full of examples to show the power with which the Divinity of Christ is illustrated by his miracles." — pp. 152, 153.

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* — "der vorher nur ideal geglaubten, nun real gefassten Wahrheit."

† Ibid., pp. 146, 147.

In the last sentence, the word "illustrated" occurs, where the purpose of the argument appears to require "proved"; but the writer, I suppose, was aware, that the latter word could not be correctly used. Miracles, symbolized into the *ideal*, may illustrate any thing, but can prove nothing. The short preceding sentence, according to which, De Wette "would not renounce all appeal to miraculous *evidence*," seems to have been more carelessly written, if it is to be understood in the common sense of the words.

## IV.

"The last office of the new Rational theology," says De Wette, according to my translation,* "is to make the might of the community of Christians again effective, and to plant faith in living power in the living life."

This is explained by the following passages in the article quoted. The main thing, according to De Wette, in historical Christianity, "manifestly is, that Christ, the central point or author of a new, holy, blessed life, a man furnished with all the qualities necessary for the work of salvation and redemption, as

* Discourse, p. 42.

wisdom, spiritual power, purity, and union with God, or, in other words, the God-man, truly lived, worked, *founded a new and holy community, and bequeathed to it his divine spirit.*" *

"The Christian should not believe in the Bible, but in Christ. He should not learn his convictions from a book, but win them with a lively inspiration in life and through life. *The reigning spirit in the Church, the faith that prevails in it, the warm vital breath of love that dwells in it, should seize upon and penetrate whoever enters it as a member.* The Bible should, indeed, be used and read, but not that faith may be properly founded upon it, or first derived from it." †

I add one quotation from the account of De Wette in "The Christian Examiner." ‡

"The kingdom of God, as a purely holy and blessed community of spirit, began at the moment when Christ, as a divine intelligence and sinless man, was recognised as the beginning and head of this kingdom, and those acknowledging him gathered in faith and love around his person. *And what Christ did for*

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* Article by De Wette, before quoted, p. 143.

† Ibid., p. 149. ‡ For September, 1838; p. 17.

*the foundation of his kingdom on earth consists in this, that he established this moral and religious community, through which the Eternal Spirit is realized upon earth.* This community is in will and deed; and has no other form than life itself, and an historical connexion with its founder."

The words which I rendered as before given, are thus translated and commented on by the writer of the pamphlet.

"De Wette actually says, that 'an improved theology should restore the *importance of Christian communion* and plant faith in its vital power in actual life.'

"The ordinances of the church have fallen into unmerited neglect; an improved theology would give them a new significance; excite a deeper interest in their observance; and restore them to their place in the concerns of life, and the affections of Christians. This is a favorite idea with De Wette, and one surely which calls for no very severe condemnation." — p. 153.

I suppose, that from this translation and comment most readers, unacquainted with the German, may have received the impression, that by the word (*Gemeinschaft*) which I have translated "community," and he has translated "communion," is meant the communion of our Lord's Supper. They will, therefore, be

surprised to learn, what every one acquainted with the German knows, that the word has not that meaning; that the writer of the pamphlet does not suppose it to have that meaning; and that the passage has no more reference to the ordinances of the Church than it appears to have in my translation. It is impossible to say, therefore, what representation he would *directly* oppose to my translation of the passage, which I have already explained and justified.

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I have now, I believe, said all that is necessary to defend myself against the charges of error brought against me; and in the Preliminary Observations, I have taken notice of every thing else in the pamphlet which seemed to me to deserve consideration. It has appeared in those observations, that what there is relating to the main subject of my Discourse is founded upon an entire misconception of the state of the argument. Should the writer of the pamphlet attempt a reply to what I have said, perhaps I may remark on it; for circumstances which I cannot foresee may render it proper for me to do so; but at present I think it very im-



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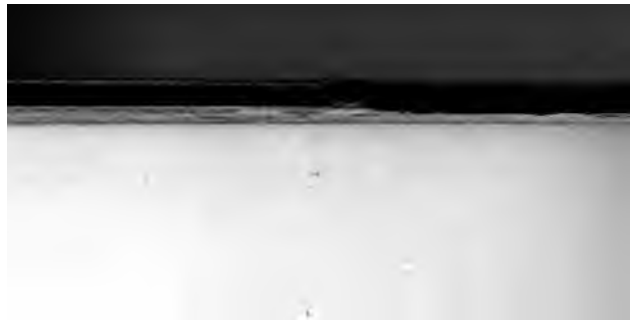
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probable that I shall. The expositions which I have made in these Remarks, though relating to subjects not familiar to most men's thoughts, are such, I believe, as may be fully understood by every intelligent reader. Whatever representations, therefore, the writer of the preceding may hereafter bring forward, or whatever confidence he may assume, every one [illegible] judge of the degree of credit he ought to [illegible] entitled; and, should I take no further notice of what he may affirm or imply, all [illegible] will suppose in consequence, that I admit its correctness.

I should regret exceedingly, if the irrelevant topics, that occupy the greater part of these pages, should become blended with the consideration of the momentous subject which I endeavoured to treat in the Discourse, on which the writer of the pamphlet remarks. In that Discourse, I wrote as a Christian, feeling the inestimable value of Christianity as a divine revelation, — not in the sense of those who may quibble and say, that this, or that, or every thing, is a revelation of God, — but in the true sense in which a Christian uses the words. This, however, is not the place to resume the sub-

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ject, and I have only to repeat my hope, that attention may not be diverted from it by the incidental discussion that has arisen out of what I have written concerning it.





[Boston, Mudrus] 1840.

# TRANSCENDENTALISM

OF

# THE GERMANS

AND OF

# COUSIN,

AND ITS

# INFLUENCE ON OPINION IN THIS COUNTRY.





(20)

# TWO ARTICLES

## FROM THE PRINCETON REVIEW,

CONCERNING THE

# TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

## OF THE GERMANS AND OF COUSIN,

AND ITS

## INFLUENCE ON OPINION IN THIS COUNTRY.

Republished by Andrews Norton.

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The following very able articles give a correct and strong impression of the character of those speculations to which they relate. They afford much information within a small compass. By fairly exhibiting the extravagances that have of late had their origin in Germany, they are adapted to rouse from their delusion such as have been beguiled by what they do not understand. Those may here become aware of the venom of the serpent, who have only been admiring its bright colors and glittering eyes.

It is, perhaps, scarcely worth while to say, that the present writer differs in opinion from the authors of the following pages in relation to some of the topics introduced. But he accords with them in their views and feelings concerning the speculations of which they treat; and he regards the articles as distinguished by their true Christian spirit not less than by their ability.

Circumstances having particularly brought them to his notice, he was led to request leave to republish them, in the belief that their circulation, beyond that of the periodical work in which they first appeared, might be a benefit to the community. Leave has been politely granted; and they now appear as they were originally published, with the exception of such corrections and changes as have been made conformably to the wishes of the authors.

Of these changes the only one of importance is the omission of the commencement of the second article. This, as it stands in





the Review, consists of a criticism of the "Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity" by the present writer, and of the pamphlet in reply to it by "An Alumnus." As far as he was personally concerned, the writer would have had no objection to republishing the remarks of a man of talent and a Christian, without reply or comment; and expressed himself to this effect in writing to the author of the article. But the portion omitted, is, without doubt, from the character of its subject, of far less general interest than what is retained.

A. N.

CAMBRIDGE, March, 1840.

# TRANSCENDENTALISM.

[FROM THE "PRINCETON REVIEW" FOR JANUARY, 1839.]

By James Waddel Alexander, and Albert Baldwin Dod.

1. *Elements of Psychology, included in a Critical Examination of Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," with Additional Pieces.* By VICTOR COUSIN, Peer of France, Member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, Member of the Institute, and Professor of the History of Ancient Philosophy in the Faculty of Literature. Translated from the French, with an Introduction and Notes, by the Rev. C. S. HENRY, D. D. Second Edition, prepared for the Use of Colleges. New York: Gould and Newman. 1838. pp. 423. 12mo.
2. *Introduction to the History of Philosophy.* By VICTOR COUSIN, Professor of Philosophy of the Faculty of Literature at Paris. Translated from the French, by HENNING GOTTFRIED LINBERG. Boston: 1832. pp. 458. 8vo.
3. *An Address delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday, 15th July,* 1838. By RALPH WALDO EMERSON. Boston. pp. 31. 8vo.

IT is we think undeniable, that, since the death of Dr. Thomas Brown of Edinburgh, metaphysical research has been at a stand in Great Britain. In the southern part of the island this had been the case for a much longer period; but the sharp and skeptical enterprise of the Scotch kept philosophical debate in motion for a time, so that a sect was formed, and we speak as familiarly of the Scotch school as we do of the Pythagorean or the Eleatic. But that line seems to have reached its term, and the few who publish at this time are either the lowliest compilers from Stewart and Brown, or, as is more frequently the case, such as have gone off in a direction altogether different, in search of a

profounder philosophy. Of the latter sort, there are some among ourselves; and we have it now in view to point out some of the causes, which may account for the essays to introduce a modified transcendentalism.

In America, the earliest school of metaphysics was founded by the followers of Locke ; and, with the clew of this great inquirer in his hand, Jonathan Edwards ventured into a labyrinth from which no English theologian had ever come out safe. By the just influence of his eminently patient and discriminating and conclusive research, this greatest of modern Christian metaphysicians put his contemporaries and their descendants upon a sort of discourse which will perhaps characterize New England Calvinism as long as there is a fibre of it left. In speaking of Edwards, we distinctly avow our conviction, that he stands immeasurably above many who have followed in his steps, and attempted his methods. If the species of reasoning which he introduced into American theology is susceptible of easy abuse, and if, in fact, it has been abused to disastrous ends, we rejoice to acquit this great and holy man of willingly giving origin to the evil. And, in what we shall cursorily remark concerning New England theology, we explicitly premise that we do not intend our Congregational brethren indiscriminately, but a defined portion of them, well known for many years as daring speculators. The theology of this school has always been, in a high degree, metaphysical ; but the metaphysics is of a Hyperborean sort, exceedingly cold and fruitless. In the conduct of a feeble or even an ordinary mind, the wire-drawing processes of New England theologizing become jejune and revolting. Taught to consider mere ratiocination as the grand, and almost sole function of the human mind, the school-boy, the youth, and the professor, pen in hand, go on, day after day, in spinning out a thread of attenuated reasoning, often ingenious, and sometimes legitimately deduced, but in a majority of instances a concatenation of unimportant propositions. It has too often been forgotten by the disciples of this school, that a man may search in useless mines, and that it is not every thing which is worth being proved. Hence the barrenness and frigidity of the sermons which were heard from the pulpits of New England during the latter half of the last century. Many of these, and many of the dissertations and treatises which poured from the press,

were proofs of remarkable subtilty, and patience of investigation, and showed how easy it is to draw forth an endless line from the stores of a single mind. For, in this operation, it was remarkable, that the preacher or philosopher relied almost exclusively on his own stores. There was little continued unfolding of scriptural argument, and little citation of the great reasonings of ancient or modern philosophy. Each metaphysician spun by himself and from his own bowels. The web of philosophical argument was dashed with no strong woof from natural science, embroidered with no flowers of literature. Where this metaphysics was plied by a strong hand, as was that of President Edwards, it was noble indeed ; deriving strength and honor from its very independence and self-sufficiency. In the hands of his son Dr. Edwards, there was equal patience, equal exactness, equal subtilty, but no new results; still there were undeniable marks of genius ; as there were also in the controversy which then began to be waged among the dwindled progeny of the giants, on the great questions of liberty and necessity, moral agency, and the nature of virtue.

But, when the same products were sought in a colder climate, and from the hands of common and unrefined men ; when every schoolmaster or parish clergyman found himself under a necessity of arguing upon the nature of the soul, the nature of virtue, and the nature of agency ; when with some this became the great matter of education, to the neglect of all science and beautiful letters, then the consequences were disastrous ; and a winter reigned in the theology of the land, second only to that of the scholastic age, and, like that, dispersed only by the return of the sun of vital religion.

In the hands of a subtile errorist, such as Emmons, these metaphysical researches led to gross absurdities, some of which still survive. We believe a few of the elder and less sophisticated preachers of New England are to this day teaching, and that their staring auditors are to this day trying to believe, that the soul is a series of exercises ; that God is the author of sin ; and that, in order to escape damnation, one must be willing to be damned. Others, running away with an error less innocent because lying nearer the source of moral reasoning, and less alarming in its guise, reasoned themselves and their hearers into the opinion, that all sin is selfishness, and that all holiness is the love of being in

general. Taking the premises of the great Edwards, they deduced a system of false theology, which under its first phase as Hopkinsianism, and under its second phase as Taylorism, has been to our church the *fons et origo malorum*, and which, in union with the Epicureanism of the Paley school, has assumed the name of Calvinism to betray it to its enemies.

It is only great wisdom which can avoid one extreme without rushing to the other. The golden mean, so much ridiculed by zealots, is precisely that which imbecility could never maintain. In philosophy, as well as in common life and religion, we find individuals and bodies of men acting on the fallacy, that the reverse of wrong, as such, is right. Human nature could not be expected to endure such a metaphysics as that of New England. It was not merely that it was false, and that it set itself up against our consciousness and our constitutional principle of self-love ; but it was cheerless, it was arctic, it was intolerable ; a man might as well carry frozen mercury in his bosom, as this in his soul. In a word, it had nothing cordial in it, and it left the heart in collapse. If it had remained in the cells of speculative adepts, it might have been tolerated ; but it was carried to the sacred desk, and doled forth to a hungry people under the species of bread and wine. No wonder nature revolted against such a dynasty. No wonder that, in disgust at such a *pabulum*, men cast about for a substitute, and sought it in tame Arminianism or genteel Deism.

The calculating people of our country, in certain portions of it, have long been enamoured of a system of ethics which is reducible to the rules of Loss and Gain. It is much more level to the apprehensions of such to say, that two and two make four, or that prodigality makes poor, or that doing good makes profit, or that gain is godliness, or that virtue is utility, than to plead for an imperative law of conscience, or for an eternal distinction between right and wrong. The former systems came home to the business and bosom of the calculator. Though he had learned to speak evil of Epicurus, yet he clasped Paley to his bosom ; and, as all men admitted that this philosopher and divine was a mighty reasoner and a fascinating writer, so the calculator went further, and adopted his ethical heresy as the basis of all morals. Some, who could not take the system in its gross form, received it under that modification, which appears in the theol-

ogy of President Dwight. Long, therefore, before the mask was completely cast away by Bentham, Mill, and the Utilitarians of England, there were hundreds of young men who had imbibed the quintessence of the poison, through their college text-books, or through the introduction of the same principles into the received authorities of law-schools and courts of justice. We think it possible to show, that the prevalence of this degrading view of the nature of holiness, namely, the view which allows to virtue no essence but its tendency to happiness, has directly led to a laxity in private morals, to a subtlety of covert dishonesty, to an easy construction of church symbols and of other contracts, and to that measurement of all things divine and human by the scale of profit, which is falsely charged upon our whole nation by our foreign enemies. We think it possible to show, that such is the tendency of Utilitarianism. And, such being its tendency, we should despair of ever seeing any return from this garden of the Hesperides, with its golden apples, were it not for a safeguard in the human soul itself, placed there by all-wise Providence. For the system runs counter to nature. Reason about it as you will, the soul cannot let so monstrous an error lie next to itself; the heart will throb forth its innate tendency, and conscience will assert its prerogative. Nor will men believe concerning *virtue*, any more than concerning *truth*, that it has no foundation but its tendency to happiness; even though such tendency be as justly predicable of the one as of the other. The very consideration of what is involved in the monosyllable OUGHT, is sufficient to bring before any man's consciousness the sense of a distinction between virtue and utility, between that which it is prudent to do, and that which it is right to do. In process of time, as more adventurous and reckless minds sailed out further upon this sea of thought, especially when some theologians went so boldly to work as to declare, that, in turning to God, we regard the Supreme Being in no other light than as an infinite occasion of personal happiness to ourselves; when this began to be vented, thoughtful men were taken aback. They queried whither they were going. They remembered that their religious emotions had included other elements. They reconsidered the grounds of the adhesion they had given in, to Paley, to Epicurus, and to self. They paused in their rapid career and looked at the system of gen-

eral consequences. And, in a good number of instances, they were ashamed of the way in which they had been trepanned out of their original ideas, and sought for something to put in the place of the idol they were indignantly throwing down. We know such men; we know that they will read these pages; men who have gone down after their guides into the vaults of the earth-born philosophy, hoping to see treasures, and gain rest to the cravings of their importunate inquirings, but who have come up again, lamenting their error, and mortified that they had been abused. These things we have said concerning the Utilitarian ethics, now prevailing under different forms in America, and chiefly in the Northern and Eastern States, as furnishing an additional reason for the eager search, that undeniably exists, after a more spiritual, elevating, and *moral* philosophy.

In tracing the irresistible progress of thought and opinion, as it regards philosophy, we have seen two sources of that dissatisfaction which for several years has prevailed, with respect to hitherto reigning metaphysics; namely, a disrelish for the coldness, heartlessness, and fruitlessness of the New England methods, and a dread of the doctrine of Utilitarianism. It might have been happy for us, if the proposal for a change had come *ab intra*, if one of our own productive minds had been led to forsake the beaten track, and point out a higher path. But such has not been the case. It has so happened, that no great native philosophical leader has as yet arisen to draw away one scholar from the common routine. This has been very unfortunate. If we are to make experiment of a new system, we would fain have it fully and fairly before our eyes; which can never be the case so long as we receive our *philosophemata* by a double transportation, from Germany *viâ* France, in parcels to suit the importers; as fast as the French forwarding philosopher gets it from Germany, and as fast as the American consignee can get it from France. There is a great inconvenience in the reception of philosophical theories by instalments; and, if our cisatlantic metaphysicians import the German article, we are sometimes forced to wait until they have learned the language well enough to hold a decent colloquy in it. Such, however, is precisely the disadvantage under which the young philosophers of America now labor. We hear much of German philosophy, and of the revelations which have been

made to its adepts; much very adroit use of certain disparaging terms, easily learned by heart, and applied to the old system, as "flat," "unspiritual," "empirical," and "sensuous"; we hear much of the progress made in ontological and psychological discovery, in the foreign universities. But, if we hear truth, the hierophants of the new system among us are not so much more intimate with the source of this great light than some of their silent readers, as to give them any exclusive right to speak *ex cathedrâ* about transcendental points. Some of them are busily learning French, in order to read in that language any *rifacimento* of Teutonic metaphysics which may come into their hands. Some are learning German; others have actually learned it. He who cannot do either, strives to gather into one the Sibylline oracles and abortive scraps of the gifted but indolent Coleridge, and his gaping imitators; or, in default of all this, sits at the urn of dilute wisdom, and sips the thrice-drawn infusion of English from French and French from German.

It might have been happy for us, we say, if the reformation in our philosophy had some root of its own in our own soil. But what is this vaunted German philosophy, of which our young men have learned the jargon? We shall endeavour to give an intelligible answer to so reasonable an inquiry. In attempting to offer a few satisfactory paragraphs on this, it is far from our purpose to profess to be adepts. We have seen a little, heard a little, and read a little, respecting it. We have even during the last fifteen years turned over one or two volumes of German metaphysics, and understood perhaps almost as much as some who have become masters; yet we disclaim a full comprehension of the several systems. The Anglo-Saxon *Dummheit*, with which Germans charge the English, reigns we fear in us, after an inveterate sort. We have tried the experiment, and proved ourselves unable to see in a fog. Our night-glasses do not reach the transcendental. In a word we are born without the *Anschauungsvermögen*; and this defect, we are persuaded, will "stick to our last sand." We once said to a German friend, speaking of Schleiermacher, "But we do not understand his book." "*Understand* it!" cried the other with amazement, "what then? but do not you *feel* it?" We deem ourselves competent, nevertheless, to give the plain reader some notices of the progress of Transcendental Philosophy.

The German philosophers whose names are most frequently heard in this country, and who indeed mark the regular succession of masters, are Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. It would be easy to multiply names, but these are the men who have carried forward the torch, from hand to hand. Though there were German metaphysicians before Kant, it is needless to name them, as he borrowed nothing from them, and certainly has the merit of standing forth to propagate a system altogether underived from his countrymen. Perhaps the best way to put our readers in possession of the peculiar tenets of Kant, would be to direct them to an able syllabus of his system by Professor Stapfer, already inserted in "The Biblical Repertory" for the year 1828. But to maintain the connexion of our remarks, we shall furnish further information; and, if we enter somewhat more into detail here than in what follows, it is because the transition to Kant from his predecessors is more abrupt than from this philosopher to any who succeeded him. In order to get a glimpse of what he taught, we must as far as possible lay aside all the prepossessions of the British school. We must not only cease to attribute all our knowledge to sensation and reflection, as our fathers were taught to do, but we must lay aside as unsatisfactory all the explanations of Reid and his followers respecting first truths and intuitive principles. We must no longer regard philosophy as a science of observation and induction, and must dismiss all our juvenile objections to a purely *a priori* scheme of metaphysics. It is the first purpose of Kant, in his own terms, to inquire "how synthetical judgments *a priori* are possible, with respect to objects of experience;" as, for example, how the idea of necessary causal connexion arises, when it is conceded that nothing is given by experience but the mere succession of events.* Indeed, it was Hume's speculations on Cause and Effect, which, as Kant tells us, first "broke his dogmatic slumbers." Proceeding from this to all the other instances in which we arrive at absolute, necessary, universal, or intuitive truths, he proves that these are not the result of experience. No induction, however broad, can ever produce the irresistible conviction with which we yield ourselves to the belief of necessary truth. "Experience (and this is the

* Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Leipzig, 1818; p. 15.

concession of Reid himself) gives us no information of what is necessary, or of what ought to exist."* In such propositions as the following, "A straight line is the shortest between two points: There is a God: The soul is immortal," &c., there is an amalgamation (*synthesis*) of a subject with an attribute, which is furnished neither by the idea of the subject, nor by experience. These synthetical judgments therefore are *a priori*, or independent of experience; that is, there is something in them beyond what experience gives. There is therefore a function of the soul prior to all experience, and to investigate this function of the soul is the purpose of the "Critique of Pure Reason." "Let us," says Stapfer, in a happy illustration, "imagine a mirror endued with perception, or sensible that external objects are reflected from its surface; let us suppose it reflecting on the phenomena which it offers to a spectator and to itself. If it come to discover the properties which render it capable of producing these phenomena, it would find itself in possession of two kinds of ideas, perfectly distinct. It would have a knowledge of the images which it reflects, and of the properties which it must have possessed previous to the production of these images. The former would be its *a posteriori* knowledge; whilst in saying to itself, 'My surface is plain, it is polished, I am impenetrable to the rays of light,' it would show itself possessed of *a priori* notions, since these properties, which it would recognise as inherent in its structure, are more ancient than any image reflected from its surface, and are the conditions to which is attached the faculty of forming images, with which it would know itself endowed. Let us push this extravagant fiction a little further. Let us imagine, that the mirror represented to itself, that external objects are entirely destitute of depth, that they are all placed upon the same plane, that they traverse each other, as the images do upon its surface, &c., and we shall have an example of objective reality attributed to modifications purely subjective. And, if we can figure to ourselves the mirror as analyzing and combining, in various ways, the properties with which it perceived itself invested; (but of which it should have contented itself to establish the existence and

* Essay on the Active Powers, Edinburgh, 4to, 1788, pp. 31, 279; also Intellectual Powers, Essay vi. c. 6.

examine the use;) drawing from these combinations conclusions relative to the organization, design, and origin of the objects which paint themselves on its surface; founding, it may be, entire systems upon the conjectures which the analysis of its properties might suggest, and which it might suppose itself capable of applying to a use entirely estranged from their nature and design; we should have some idea of the grounds and tendency of the reproaches which the author of the critical philosophy addresses to human reason, when, forgetting the veritable destination of its laws and of those of the other intellectual faculties, — a destination which is limited to the acquisition and perfecting of experience, — it employs these laws to the investigation of objects beyond the domain of experience, and assumes the right of affirming on their existence, of examining their qualities, and determining their relations to man."

Instead therefore of examining the nature of things, the objective world without us, Kant set himself to scrutinize the microcosm, to learn the nature of the cognitive subject. In pursuing this inquiry he finds, not that the mind is moulded by its objects, but that the objects are moulded by the mind. The external world is in our thoughts such as it is, simply because our thoughts are necessarily such as they are. The moulds, so to speak, are within us. We see things only under certain conditions; certain laws restrain and limit all our functions. We conceive of a given event as occurring in time and in space. But this time and this space are not objective realities, existing whether we think about them or not; they are the mere *forms a priori*. Our minds refuse to conceive of sensible objects, except under these forms. Time and space therefore are not the results of experience, neither are they abstract ideas; for all particular times and spaces are possible, only by reason of this original constitution of the mind.*

According to this system, all that of which we can be cognizant is either necessary or contingent. That which is necessary is *a priori*, and belongs to the province of pure reason. That which is contingent is *a posteriori*, and belongs to the province of experience. The former he calls *pure*, the latter *empirical*; and it is the circle of knowledge con-

* Kritik d. r. V., pp. 28 – 43.

tained in the former, which constitutes the far-famed Transcendental Philosophy.*

Every English and American reader must fail to penetrate even the husk of German and mock-German philosophy, unless he has accepted the distinction between the *reason* and the *understanding*. We are not aware, that the distinction ever obtained any footing in our modern English science until the time of Coleridge, who in several of his works has striven, *pugnis et calcibus*, to install it into our philosophical terminology. "The understanding," says Kant, "is the faculty judging according to sense." "Reason," says Coleridge, "is the power of universal and necessary convictions, the source and substance of truths above sense, and having their evidence in themselves." † Resuming, then, the thread which we have dropped, the Prussian philosopher dissected the cognitive subject or soul into three distinct faculties; viz. 1st. Sense, or Sensibility. 2d. Understanding. 3d. Reason.

Sense receives and works up the multiform material, and brings it to consciousness. This it accomplishes partly as a mere "receptivity," passively accepting sensations, and partly as an active power or spontaneity. The Understanding is a step higher than sense. What sense has apprehended, the understanding takes up, and by its synthetizing activity (die synthetisirende Thätigkeit) presents under certain forms or conditions, which, by a term borrowed from logic, are called Categories. These are twelve, classified under the heads of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Modality. Of Quantity: 1. *Unity*. 2. *Plurality*. 3. *Totality*. Of Quality: 4. *Affirmation*, or *Reality*. 5. *Negation*, or *Privation*. 6. *Limitation*. Of Relation: 7. *Substance* and *Accident*. 8. *Cause* and *Effect*. 9. *Action* and *Reaction*. Of Modality: 10. *Possibility* and *Impossibility*. 11. *Existence* and *Non-existence*. 12. *Necessity* and *Contingency*. ‡ Whatsoever now the understanding takes cognizance of, it knows under some of these forms; and every intellection receives the

* Kritik d. r. V., p. 19.

† Even in German, this distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft* was not always recognised. See a philological analysis of the latter term, in Herder's *Metakritik*, Vol. II. p. 11. See Kritik d. r. V. Elementarl. II. Th. II. Abth. I. Buch.

‡ Kritik d. r. V., p. 78.

object as connected with at least four of these categories at once, from the four different classes. Kant attributed to the understanding the function of reducing multiplicity to unity. The result of this reduction to unity, in our consciousness, is a Conception (Begriff). All possible conceptions are produced under the twelve categories as their necessary forms. These are therefore the conditions of all thought; yet they afford no knowledge of the objects *per se*; and have not the slightest significancy independent of time and space. Time and space are the ways or forms under which objects are made sensible; and the categories are the ways or forms under which the same objects are understood (begriffen).

The Reason, finally, is the sublime of human spontaneity. It takes cognizance of that which is self-evident, necessary, absolute, infinite, eternal. Its objects are beyond the sphere, not merely of time and space, but of all ratiocination; and it is among these objects, "above the stir and smoke of this dim spot, which men call earth," that the transcendental philosophers have most successfully expatiated. While the understanding is discursive, and collects proof, and deduces judgments, referring to other faculties as its authority, the reason is self-sufficient, intuitive, immediate, and infallible in all its dictates. In the pure reason, there reside, *a priori*, three ideas, viz. 1. Of that which is absolute and of itself, whether subjective or objective; the former being the theme of psychology, the latter of ontology. 2. Of a supreme and independent real cause of all that is; namely, of God; this being the object of theology. 3. Of an absolute totality of all phenomena; namely, the universe, τὸ πᾶν; being the object of cosmology.

The eagerness of the philosophical public to discover how these principles might legitimately affect the interests of ethics and theology, led Kant to publish, in 1787, his "Critique of Practical Reason." In this, as in several other similar works indicated in our volume for 1828, he declared himself, to a certain extent; still leaving it a matter of dispute among his adherents whether he was a Deist or a Christian. His adversaries assert, that his argument for the being of a God is inconsistent with his system, and unworthy of being admitted; and even his friends admit that he never gave his assent to the supernatural origin of Christianity.

Nothing, however, in the whole system is more striking than the foundation which it gives to morals; for here, and nowhere else, Kant forsakes the character of a mere critic, and lays down absolute and final dictates of reason. There is, he teaches, an original and invariable law, residing in the depths of human consciousness, and commanding what is right. This he calls the *categorical imperative*. It urges man to act virtuously, *even at the expense of happiness*. Translated into words, it runs thus: "Act in such a manner, that the maxim of your will may be valid in all circumstances, as a principle of universal legislation."* Proceeding from this he builds his natural theology on his ethics; argues the necessity of another life, and an almighty and omniscient Judge. The three "postulates of the Practical Reason," are God, Freedom, and Immortality.† It is now, we believe, generally conceded, that these moral and theological speculations, are an after-thought, a supplement to the main structure, and scarcely worthy of reverence for their consistency, however interesting as proofs of the strong leaning of their author towards the faith of his childhood. It was the desire of Kant to appear favorable to Christianity. At his day Infidelity had not grown so bold as it has since done; and it is especially worthy of consideration, that, whenever Kant speaks of the Divine Being, he distinctly conveys the idea of a personal God, objectively existing, separate from nature, and independent of the cognizance of finite spirits.‡

It deserves to be noticed, that Kant, in pursuance of his vocation as a *critical* rather than a constructive philosopher, did not attribute to Reason those divine and active powers which later philosophers have assumed, and which are claimed for her by some of our American imitators, who, we would

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* "Handle so dass die Maxime deines Willes jederzeit zugleich als Princip einer allgemeinen Gesetzgebung gelten koenne." — Kritik der practischen Vernunft. 5te Aufl. Leipz. 1818; p. 54.

† Kritik d. p. V., p. 213. ff.

‡ Those who choose to pursue this subject further, will find satisfaction in the following works, viz. Kant's "Religion innerhalb der Ideen d. Menschl. Vernunft," 2te Aufl. 1792; and the reply to it, by Sartorius, "Die Religion ausserhalb der Grenzen der Blosen Vernunft," u. s. w. Marburg, 1822. In this work (p. 62), he quotes, from Vincent, the following observation, which is not here out of place; "Who can refrain from a smile, at beholding Christ and his apostles, brought into the train of philosophy, and made successively Wolfians, Crusians, Kantians, Fichteans, and Schellingians!"

gladly believe, are ignorant of the apotheosis of reason which they thus subserve. The genuine Kantians have always maintained, that, in what their master delivered concerning the absolute and the infinite, he simply meant to attribute to pure reason the power of directing the cognitive energy beyond its nearer objects, and to extend its research indefinitely ; but by no means to challenge for this power the direct intuition of the absolute, as the veritable object of infallible insight.

The chief objection which was made to the "Critique of Pure Reason," and to the other works of the same author, was, that they were purposely obscure ; and it cannot be denied, that, in addition to the inherent intricacy of the subject, the reader is greatly perplexed by a multiplicity of new-coined words, and still more by an arbitrary wresting of familiar terms to meanings remote from their common acceptation. It is partly for this reason, that Kant, like another great innovator of the age, Jeremy Bentham, has been best represented by the pens of his disciples ; and that aid, which Bentham owed to Dumont, was afforded to Kant by Schulze, a chaplain of the king of Prussia.* This writer acknowledges, however, that at the time when he wrote, that is, in 1791, the diction of his master still remained a hieroglyphic to the public.† In 1798, when Coleridge was in Germany, he heard much the same statement from the venerable Klopstock. "He said the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible ; that he had often been pestered by the Kantians, but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it, and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do, by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion."‡ Coleridge, however, declares that in that very year almost all the professors in Germany were either Kantians, or disciples of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantian ; and, in the twelfth chapter of the work just cited, he vindicates Kant

* Erläuterungen ueber des Herrn Professor Kant Critik der reinen Vernunft; von Johann Schulze, u. s. w. Koenigsberg, 1791.

† Schulze, p. 6.

‡ Biographia Literaria, Vol. II. p. 160. N. Y. edition.



from the charge of needless obscurity. At the same time he tells us that the disciples, during their master's lifetime, quarrelled about the meaning of his *dicta*, and that the old philosopher used to reply to their appeals, "I meant what I said, and at the age of near fourscore, I have something else and more important to do, than to write a commentary on my own works."

In spite of this obscurity, however, the Critical Philosophy assumed the empire in the German universities; but not without opposition from the highest sources. The celebrated John George Haman uttered a touching *caveat* against the irreligious tendency of Kant's system. He declared, in his letters to Jacobi, and elsewhere, that the new philosophy owed many of its deductions to a mere play on words, and perplexed its readers in a maze of unwonted expressions; that the Kantian τὸ ὄν was a mere conception, of which the objective existence or non-existence could not be determined by reason. He warned the student of philosophy against a system of delusion, in which man is made every thing and God is made nothing; a warning infinitely more appropriate as applied to the systems which have succeeded Kant, and which are proffered to the credulous complaisance of the American public.* In 1799 the still more celebrated Herder entered the field as an antagonist, in his *Metakritik*.† Like Haman he brings the charge of perplexed language, and the misunderstanding and abuse of abstractions. He characterizes the "Critique of Pure Reason" in general, as *transcendental mist* (transcendentalen Dunst), a *fog* of *fine-spun verbiage* (nebelichtes Wortgespinnst), calculated by means of dialectical sorcery to confound the very implement of reason, namely, language. The attention of the reader is the rather called to this judgment, as it is common to attribute the obscurity of our philosopher to some accidents of his vernacular tongue, rather than to his own phraseology; but here is the verdict of a German, a scholar, a philosopher, and a pupil of his own. If space were allowed, we might go much further, and dilate upon the denunciation of the

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* Jacobi's Schriften, Vol. I. 1781, pp. 371 – 390. Vol. IV. p. 31. Goethe's Dichtung und Wahrheit; Werke, Vol. XXVI.

† Verstand und Erfahrung: eine Metakritik zur Kritik d. r. Vernunft; von J. G. Herder. Leipzig, 1799.

Kantian idealism, by a number of eminent men, such as Garve, Eberhard, Tiedemann, Tittel, Nicolai, and Jacobi; of whom the first two were formally answered by Kant, while the last is the sole representative of a system, which founds all philosophy in an affectionate religious faith, independent of revelation.*

But it is time we should leave Kant, and consider his great successor. John Theophilus Fichte, who was born in 1762, and died in 1814, is thought by the initiated to have carried philosophy forward from its critical towards its scientific condition. He was familiar with Kant, and wrote in his manner, so that his first important work, published in 1792, was attributed to the great master. Kant had set out with a critical analysis of Understanding, Reason, and Judgment. Some of his followers, especially Reinhold, had started with the phenomenon of consciousness. Fichte simplified a step further, and began, not with a thing, or a faculty, but an act. Fichte, say his admirers, leaves us at the apex of the pyramid.† True enough, but then the pyramid is upside down; the apex and support being the monosyllable I. The notion of a thought which is its own object, and the notion of I, are identical. The *Ego* looks at itself; and thus we have the idea of *Ego* as knowing, and *Ego* as known, the intelligent and the existent I. This Ego, absolute and free, has regard to an object, or *Non-Ego*: it creates this *Non-Ego* by its own activity: in a word, it creates objective nature.‡

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* See Jacobi von den Göttlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung. 2te Aufl. Leipzig, 1822. See also Rixner's Handbuch d. Geschichte d. Philosophie; Sulzbach, 1829, Vol. III. §§ 143, 144.

† See a similar expression in Mr. Linberg's note to Cousin's Introduction, p. 455.

‡ That our syntax, as well as our philosophy, is becoming a new affair, may be seen from the following specimen of Dr. Henry's English: "The fundamental fact of consciousness is a complex phenomenon, composed of three terms: first, the *me* and the *not me*," &c. Introd. p. xx. Now if we must have nonsense, we feel that it is our privilege, as descendants of Englishmen, to have it in good grammar. Apropos of this, we find some of our contemporaries quoting Plato in Cousin's version: surely our scholarship must be near its ebb! If the Greek is absolutely unintelligible, and if we have neither Sydenham nor Taylor, let us get a friend to English it for us. It is quite in the style of the French pulpit, when we find Dr. Henry citing the Vulgate (page xxii). "It is the Logos, the Word of St. John, which 'lighteth every man that cometh into the world;' '*illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum.*'" The reader must be left to divine why Dr. Henry here quotes Latin.

The whole of the Fichtean philosophy is a following out of this track. It creates the world out of the mind's act: and it regards the outward universe as nothing but a limit of our being on which thought operates; a limit, moreover, springing from the mind's creative power.* In such a system as this, what place is found for the Great Author of the Universe? Fichte replies, that the being of the Godhead (which he holds to be identical with the active and moral *ordo mundi*) is an object not of theoretical knowledge, but of rational faith; and that this faith is purely moral. On a certain occasion, we are told by Madame de Staël, he said to his auditors, that in the following lecture he would proceed to create God; an expression in perfect harmony with his principle, but one which gave just offence to the public. "According to Fichte," says Cousin, in his "Introduction to the History of Philosophy," "God is nothing but the subject of thought conceived as absolute; he is therefore still the I. But, as it is repugnant to human thought, that the I of man, which might indeed be transferred into nature should be imposed upon God, Fichte distinguishes between a twofold I, the one phenomenal, namely, the I which each of us represents; the other is itself the substance of the I, namely, God himself. God is the absolute I."† Even Coleridge, who regarded Fichte as giving the first idea of a system truly metaphysical, admits that it "degenerated into a crude *egoismus*, a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to NATURE, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy; while his *religion* consisted in the assumption of a mere ORDO ORDINANS, which we were permitted *exotericè* to call God."‡

In a seeming ecstasy of admiration, the translator of Cousin's "Introduction" says of this system; "Fichte has, in arriving at this point, indeed reached the very summit of the pyramid of human science; and if the man lives, or has lived, who has as yet discovered a flaw in the chain of reasoning that leads to this point, I am ignorant of the fact."§ It may be observed of many of the systems with which it is sought to render our youth gradually familiar, that at the first ap-

* Biographie Universelle, Vol. XIV. p. 486. — Rixner, Vol. III. p. 337. ff.
† Linberg's Translation, p. 398.
‡ Biographia Literaria, Vol. I. p. 95.
§ Cousin's Introduction, by Linberg. Boston, 1832. pp. 454–465.

proach they have a horrid aspect of atheism; but that the adepts have the most ingenious method imaginable of correcting this impression. There is probably not a Pantheist in America who will own the name; nor is there a greater certainty concerning things future, than that the free ingress of transcendentalism will smooth the way for the denial of all that we adore and love in the august idea of God. Fichte was at first reputed to be an atheist; and one of his works was instantly confiscated with rigor throughout all Saxony. As is usual in such cases, he and his abettors wrote appeals and apologies. Herder, then vice-president of the Weimar consistory, took part against him. All Germany rang with the quarrel. It was at this memorable crisis, that Schelling arose in opposition to Fichte, in behalf of a system still more transcendental; of which more hereafter. He became the fashionable philosopher of Jena, for there are fashions in philosophy, especially in Germany. Poor Fichte fought as he could, but the public, having tasted a more intoxicating beverage, could never return to a flatter metaphysics. Fichte is supposed to have advanced in his later years to a more consistent idealism. He always declared, that the Kantians did not comprehend their master's system; we believe as much ourselves: but he added, that in the new system of idealism he was only giving consistent developement to the principles of Kant.

It was reserved for other hands to complete the structure; or, if we acknowledge that the pyramid was now complete, it afforded a test for the flight of more consistent, or more adventurous minds, into the transcendental empyrean. It was Frederick William Joseph Schelling, who, to use the phrases of his admirers, brought philosophy to its perfection, as the science of the Absolute. Kant had scrutinized the cognitive subject, and determined, except in regard to the moral imperative, that absolute knowledge is unattainable. Fichte followed him, and, out of the productive *Ego*, created the objective world, still giving countenance however to the figment of a seeming dualism, and discriminating between the thinker and that which is thought. But Schelling, with a boldness unequalled in every previous attempt, merged all in one, and declared, as the great discovery of the age, and first truth of absolute wisdom, that subject and object are one, that the *Ego* and the *Non-Ego* are identical. Knowledge

and Being are no longer different. His system was therefore expressively called the system of identity, or the philosophy of the absolute.*

Here, as in a former case, we ask, What place is left for the Most High? Schelling is at no loss for an answer. God is in truth the very object of all philosophy; but it is God revealing himself in the universe. The divine being, once hidden, has a perpetual tendency to self-revelation; a process of evolution which is for ever going onward, and producing the world, or nature. It is this developement which we see and feel, and of which we are a part. The universe, therefore, becomes as important a portion of the philosophy of Schelling, as of that of the ancient Gnostics, or of Spinoza.† We do not wish to be understood as comprehending this profane modification of atheism, for we almost tremble while we write, we will not say at the notions, but the expressions of men who treat of the genesis of divinity, as coolly as Hesiod of the birth of gods; yet we will proceed. In the absolute philosophy, God is a principle, not personal, but tending to personality, becoming personal (*eine werdende Persönlichkeit*); a tendency manifested in, and producing, the phenomena of the universe. This eternal developement is a mighty effort towards self-consciousness; and the consciousness of human reason is indeed the consciousness of God; a state in which the absolute spirit views itself.‡

This, we need scarcely say, is a highly flattering illusion

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* Rixner, Vol. III. § 167.

† In the new philosophy, there is little reference had to the distinction between matter and spirit; in this respect the grand error of the ancient Greeks reappears, and the inevitable result is an inextricable tangle of physics with metaphysics. Material images are always dangerous aids in the philosophy of the mind; but the Germans are so far from being aware of this, that a large part of their statements are merely transformation of sensible images into expressions of pure thought. By running away with analogies, a puerile imagination may see resemblances between material and immaterial objects, which a puerile judgment may stamp as verities. Hence, in the system of Schelling, galvanism, electricity, and magnetism have place in the very midst of psychology. Hence, in the system of Cousin, expansion and concentration become elements of mental analysis. Hence, also, England being an island, her philosophers cannot be transcendental. The ridiculous passage in which this truly French statement is conveyed, is too striking to be omitted: "England, gentlemen," says M. Cousin," is a very considerable island; in England *every thing stops at certain limits*, nothing is there developed on a great scale." — Introduction, p. 380.

‡ See Bretschneider, Ueber die Grundansichten der theologischen Systeme der Proff. Schleiermacher und Marheincke. Leipzig, 1828. p. 5.

to the soaring mind. The infinite chasm between heaven and earth is no more. Human action is the action of the infinite. Man can know the infinite by immediate insight, because he is himself infinite. God is all things, and all things are God; we are ourselves in God and God in us. And here the happy language of a writer in the Edinburgh Review for 1829, whose article on Cousin is highly praised and largely quoted by Dr. Henry, may be cited by us, though with an intention very different from that of the latter. "In this act of knowledge, which, after Fichte, Schelling calls the Intellectual Intuition, there exists no distinction of subject and object, — no contrast of knowledge and existence; — all difference is lost in absolute indifference, — all plurality in absolute unity. The intuition itself — reason — and the absolute — are identical. The absolute exists only as known by reason, and reason knows only as being itself the absolute."* As a natural consequence, this direct cognition of the absolute, the unconditioned, and the infinite, implies the annihilation of consciousness; for it is of the very essence of consciousness to conceive of the object of thought as separate from its subject. It is a further consequence, that there can be no personal immortality of the soul; the hope of which he characterizes as a vain solace (eitle Freude): † in return for which fond illusion, Schelling cheers us with an immortality in which the qualities of the soul re-enter into the universal mass; "an immortality," says Madame de Staël, "which terribly resembles death; since physical death itself is nothing but universal nature reclaiming the gifts she had made to the individual."‡

Such is the philosophy, which up to this very hour is taught in several of the German universities, by Protestant teachers of religion, and to which, more alarming still, a goodly number among our neophytes in metaphysics are endeavouring to attain. But M. Cousin somewhat sneers at our apprehension of the "bugbear" Pantheism, and we may yet be called upon by American clergymen to abandon all belief in a personal God, or any Deity but the universe. It is very true, as we shall see, that M. Cousin does not avow himself to be a disciple of Schelling. It is further true, that he diverges from him in important particulars, and earnestly, though, as we think,

* Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1829, Art. XI. p. 208.
† Bretschneider, ubi supra, p. 12.
‡ De l'Allemagne, T. III. p. 114, ed. Paris, 1814.

vainly endeavours to wrest his own system into a conformity with revelation; yet his whole scheme is a conduit from the stream of German transcendentalism at the most corrupt part of its current; and his works abound with expressions which savour too strongly of doctrines more *prononcées* than those which he has avowed. In the following sentences we know not to what school he can allude, if not to that of Schelling, Oken, or Hegel:* "Fichte died in 1815, and even before his death a new philosophy, unable to stop at the system of absolute subjectivity, and the summit of the pyramid of the *me*, has redescended to the earth, and returned to nearer views of actual reality. The contemporaneous German philosophy, which now exerts as great an influence, and possesses as high an authority in Germany, as ever did that of Kant or Fichte, bears the title of the philosophy of nature. The title alone indicates some return towards reality."†

We have sometimes been strongly tempted to suspect, that many of the enthusiastic admirers of Coleridge's prose works are entirely unaware of the extremes to which their master's principles of philosophizing would legitimately lead them. None can be more open than ourselves to impressions from the great genius and inimitable diction of this philosopher and poet; we have felt its fascinations, and in hanging over his pages, and especially his noble denunciations of the utilitarian Ethics, we have almost forgotten how indeterminate and fruitless are most of his reasonings, and how rotten the foundation of his scheme. After our declaration, that the system of Schelling is a system of Pantheism, or that sort of Atheism which denies the personality of God, many will be startled when we assure them, that Coleridge maintained the great principles of this very school. We disclaim, indeed, the intention of representing this learned man as having coincided with the German pantheist in all the remote consequences of his theory, however legitimate. But that the system of Coleridge and the system of Schelling are the same in their leading principles, will be denied by no one who is familiar with both. Nay, we have Coleridge himself making the most ample avowal of this coincidence, for the purpose, as it should seem, of escaping the charge of plagiarism from the German philosopher. Let us hear himself;

* Cousin's Introd. to Hist. of Philosophy, page 427. Boston.

† The title of one of Schelling's works, Ideen zur Naturphilosophie; 1797.

"In Schelling's 'NATUR-PHILOSOPHIE,' and the 'SYSTEM DES TRANSCENDENTALEN IDEALISMUS,' I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do." And then, as if to account for the somewhat singular fact, that the dissertation in the *Biographia Literaria*, on the reciprocal relations of the *esse* and the *cogitare*, is a literal translation from the Introduction to a work of Schelling, he proceeds to say:* "We had studied in the same school; been disciplined by the same preparatory philosophy, namely, that of Kant; we had both equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno," &c. &c. And again: "To me it will be happiness and honor enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes."† After reading these avowals, and after having learned the ravages of this very philosophy among the present generation of clergymen in Germany, we are heartily thankful that Coleridge never summoned sufficient energy to give us any thing more than fragments; while we are filled with amazement at the sight of Christian ministers among ourselves, men of education and piety, either subscribing to statements which they do not comprehend, or giving the weight of their authority to the conclusions which, by the best theologians even of Germany, are denounced as incompatible with the fundamentals, we say not of Christianity, but of natural religion. Let our young metaphysicians learn from Coleridge and Cousin to tolerate and admire Schelling, and they will soon learn from Schelling himself, that God is every thing.‡

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* This seeming plagiarism is set in the best light of which the facts admit, in the preface to the "Specimens of the Table Talk," New York, 1835, p. xxv. *et seq.* But the whole vindicatory argument is singular in the history of literary borrowing. See, on the same topic, "The British Magazine," for January, 1835.

† Biographia Literaria, Vol. I. pp. 95, 97. The reader, in order to do justice, at once, to us in bringing so grave a charge, and to the memory of Coleridge, should not fail to consult the work here cited. On p. 169, will be found this pregnant declaration. "We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD." See also *The Friend*, Essay xiii. p. 76, note; likewise p. 451, ed. Burlington, 1831; likewise *Aids to Reflection*, note 50, p. 284, ed. 1829.

‡ In all that we have written about Schelling, we have had reference to

We almost shrink from the attempt to conduct our readers any lower down in the circling vaults of German wisdom; we have not yet reached the end, for in the lowest deep a lower deep still opens wide, in the system of Hegel and his followers.* When we speak of this professor, we shall not be scrupulous in distinguishing between his own opinions and those of his immediate and acknowledged followers; and, this being premised, it may be said that his was the system prevailing in Germany on the arrival of the last steamer.

George Frederick William Hegel was born in 1770, and died within the last three or four years. He was professor, first at Jena, and afterwards at Heidelberg and at Berlin; in the last of which chairs he succeeded Fichte, in 1818. His system purported to be an improvement on that of Schelling. It is said by the Hegelians, that in contradistinction from that of Fichte, which was a subjective idealism, and from that of Schelling, which was an objective idealism, the scheme of Hegel takes the true position as an absolute idealism.† Hegel, no less than Schelling, maintained universal identity, or that all things are the same; but, while the former postulated this, as an intellectual intuition, the latter proceeded to prove it by a scientific process.‡ Both teach, but with the same difference as to the origin of the dogma, that thought and being are identical. In his earliest work, Hegel undertook to show how the I, through manifold and multiform self-evolutions, comes to be, first Consciousness, then Self-Consciousness, then Reason, and, finally, Self-Comprehending and Religious Spirit.§

All philosophy, according to Hegel, is but an attempt to answer a simple question, viz. *Quid est?* And the answer to this involves all Truth, all Reason; for whatever is, is Reason. All reality is reasonable, all that is reasonable is real. Hence the only real existence is the ideas of Reason. All

his published systems. What changes have taken place in his way of thinking within the last ten years, we have not been in a situation to know. It is, however, said, that he has abandoned some of his anti-christian notions.

* "Io sono al *terzo cerchio* della piova
Eterna, maladetta, fredda, e greve."
*Dante, Inferno, Canto VI.*

† Conversations-Lexikon, Art. *Hegel.*

‡ Rixner, Vol. III. p. 437. Marheineke, Dogmatik, §§ 1–68.

§ Die Phaenomenologie des Geistes. Bamberg, 1807.

reality (Wirklichkeit) being thoroughly rational, is also divine ; yea is God revealing himself or developing himself. Nature is God coming to self-consciousness.* God reveals himself in creation, or in the universe, by a series of eternal unfoldings, some in matter, some in mind ; and thus the Deity is in a perpetual effort towards self-realization.† The history of Physics is therefore the necessary career of divine self-evolution : indeed, God thinks worlds, just as the mind thinks thoughts.

In order to philosophize aright, we must lose our own personality in God, who is chiefly revealed in the acts of the human mind. In the infinite developements of divinity, and the infinite progress towards self-consciousness, the greatest success is reached in the exertions of human reason. In men's minds, therefore, is the highest manifestation of God. God recognises himself best in human reason, which is a consciousness of God (Gottesbewusstseyn). And it is by human reason, that the world (hitherto without thought, and so without existence, mere negation,) comes into consciousness : thus God is revealed in the world.‡

God is the Idea of all Ideas, or the absolute Idea : hence our ideal thought is divine thought, and this is no other than reason.§ "The doctrine of the being of God is no other than that of the revelation of himself in the idea of him." ‖ "God *exists* only as knowledge (*Wissen*) : in this knowledge, and as such, he knows himself, and it is this very knowledge, *which is his existence.*" ¶ We may therefore say with truth, *God exists as an Idea.***

After thus arriving at an ideal God, we learn, that Philoso-

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* Baur, Christl. Gnosis, p. 672.

† Rixner, p. 444.

‡ Marheineke, Dogmatik. § 229. ff. Bretschneider, *ubi supra*, p. 49.

§ Bretschneider, *ubi supra*, p. 40.

‖ Marheineke, § 147, p. 87.

¶ Marheineke, § 153, as cited by Bretschneider ; but in our edition (the 3d.) these words do not occur, but we read "Das Seyn Gottes also ist selbst noch etwas anders, als dessen Bestimmtheit selber oder das Wissen." It will not seem strange to any one familiar with the present condition of philosophy, that we cite Marheineke as an authentic expounder of Hegel ; it is just so to regard him, and we may presume that those points of the system which are anti-christian, will, to say the least, not be exaggerated by a theological professor.

** Marheineke, Dogmatik, § 174, *apud* Bretschneider's Grundansichten, p. 43.

phy and Religion draw us away from our little selves, so that our separate consciousness is dissolved in that of God. Philosophy is Religion; and "true Religion frees man from all that is low, and from himself, from clinging to *I-hood* (Ichheit) and subjectivity, and helps him to life in God, as the Truth, and thereby to true life."* In this oblation of personal identity, we must not claim property even in our own thoughts. By a step beyond Emmonism, Hegel teaches, that it is God who thinks in us; nay, that it is precisely that which thinks in us, which is God. Marheineke himself manifests tokens of alarm, when he states this doctrine.† The pure and primal *substance* manifests itself as the subject; and "true knowledge of the absolute is the absolute itself." There is but a step to take, and we arrive at the tenet, that the universe and God are one.‡ The Hegelians attempt to distinguish this from the doctrine of Spinoza, but their distinctions are inappreciable; "'t is the same rope at either end they twist:" their scheme is Pantheism. And as God is revealed by all the phenomena of the world's history, he is partly revealed by moral action, and consequently by sin, no less than by holiness. Sin is therefore a part of the necessary evolution of the divine principle; or rather, in any sense which can affect the conscience, there is no evil in sin, — there is no sin. This is a part of the philosophy of Hegel, which has given great pain to pious men in Germany, who have repeatedly complained of it as subverting the first principles of morality, not merely in theory but in practice; and begetting a fatalism, which threatens alike the foundations of religion and of state. A late pantheistic poet teaches us, that all which we regard as sin, is necessary, and therefore good, and may, to other intelligences, justly appear most lovely! § But there are conclusions of the new philosophy still more surprising, for which our inchoate metaphysicians should be getting ready. It is well said by an acute writer

* Bretschneider, p. 45. Marheineke, p. 83. See also Hegel's Encyklopaedie, p. 593, ff. Baur's Gnosis, p. 672.

† Dogmatik, p. 67.

‡ Bretschneider. Grundansichten, p. 50. Rixner, himself a devotee to this German Buddhism, cites what follows: "The knowledge of the absolute identity of God and the Universe (des Alls) is *Reason:* the crown and perfection of self-recognising and self-comprehending Reason is philosophy." Vol. III. p. 392.

§ Schefer.

already quoted, that when according to the demands of Schelling we annihilate first the object and then the subject, the remainder is zero.* Though Schelling is not known to have admitted this, his critics were not slow to perceive it. Schulze, in particular, declared, that, according to this system, *Everything is Nothing, and Nothing is Everything*;† and Köppen called this the philosophy of Absolute Nothing. It was reserved for Hegel to abandon all the scruples of six thousand years, and publish the discovery, — certainly the most wonderful in the history of human research, — that *Something and Nothing are the same!* In declaring it, he almost apologizes, for he says, that this proposition appears so paradoxical, that it may readily be supposed that it is not seriously maintained.‡ Yet he is far from being ambiguous. Something and Nothing are the same. The Absolute, of which so much is vaunted, is nothing.§ But the conclusion which is perhaps already anticipated by the reader's mind, and which leaves us incapacitated for comment, is this, — we shudder while we record it, — that, after the exhaustive abstraction is carried to infinity in search of God, we arrive at nothing.‖ *God himself is nothing!*

The German philosophy was first made known to the French by the *Allemagne* of Madame de Staël. It attracted some attention as an extravaganza of the German mind, but it made few proselytes until it was taken up by M. Cousin. It was in the year 1816, that he first commenced the importation of the German metaphysics. He had been at that time recently appointed Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Literature at Paris. He continued to lecture until 1820, when he incurred the disapprobation of the French government, and his lectures were suspended. In 1827 he was restored to the exercise of his functions as a Professor

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* Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1829, p. 208.

† Schulze's Aphorismen, p. 141 of Rixner.

‡ Hegel's Encyclopaedie, 3te Ausg. p. 103. "Seyn und Nichts ist dasselbe."

§ Ib., p. 101.

‖ Ib., p. 102. ff. The same is expressly taught by Marheineke, Dogmatik, § 125; and, as our allegation is too important to be left without evidence, here are his words: "In dieser Unbestimmtheit ist Gott das Gedankenlose, die noch in sich selbst beharrende, unmittelbare Einheit des Seyns und Nichtseyns und *kann Alles, was von Gott bejaht wird, ebenso sehr verneint werden.*"

of the Faculty of Literature, and continued to lecture until 1832, when he was made a Peer of France.*

The principal original works which M. Cousin has published are his "Introduction to the History of Philosophy," comprising the course of Lectures delivered by him in 1828; and the "History of Philosophy of the Eighteenth Century," containing his Lectures for 1829. His other contributions to philosophy have been given in the form of Prefaces and Notes to various translations which he has published. The first of the abovenamed works has been translated for us by Mr. Linberg; and Dr. Henry has translated and published, under the title of "Elements of Psychology," that part of the other which contains M. Cousin's criticisms upon the philosophy of Locke.

It would be difficult to define precisely how far the philosophical system, which Dr. Henry is seeking to domiciliate among us, agrees with the mis-shapen phantasies which we have brought before the notice of our readers. When language has ceased to be the representative of ideas, it is not easy to tell what are intended to be equivalent forms of speech. M. Cousin, moreover, professes to discard the phraseology of Kant, even where he adopts his ideas, and deprives us thus far of the means of recognition. But unhappily we do not find, that the "way in which men express themselves in France" is any more intelligible than the dialect of "Königsberg." Even Mr. Linberg, "the accomplished translator" and admirer of Cousin, finds it difficult occasionally to understand what M. Cousin precisely means,† and M. Cousin himself now and then betrays an obscure consciousness of having "reached a height, where he is, as it were, out of sight of land."‡

* Dr Henry, who seems anxious to give his readers an exalted idea of the philosophic temperament of M. Cousin, says, that "he rarely speaks in the Chamber of Peers, — that he takes part in the discussions of that body only where some question relating to public instruction is before the Chamber; or, on extremely rare occasions, when no good citizen should keep silence." Dr Henry calculates rather largely upon the ignorance of his readers, as to the transactions and debates of the French Chamber of Peers. We need only refer, in illustration of the philosophic elevation of M. Cousin, to one of the most disgraceful scenes, that ever occurred in any legislative body, in which this gentleman, in the course of a debate upon the question of Spanish intervention, gave the *lie direct* to Count Molé, one of the ministry.

† Cousin's Introd. p. 450.

‡ Ibid., p. 123.

We are further embarrassed in the interpretation of his system, by the material consideration, that no full exposition of it has as yet been given to the world. Though it is now twenty-three years since he "first faltered the name of Eclecticism," and entered upon the establishment of a new school in philosophy, we are still left to gather its principles as they lie scattered in Fragments, Prefaces, Programmes of Lectures, and Historical Criticisms. While the system has only this fragmentary existence, it is too early to pronounce of it, as Dr. Henry does, "that it is a distinct scientific theory, having its method, its principle, and its consequences." * We do not feel ourselves competent to decide upon the coherency and completeness of a system of philosophy, which has as yet received only a partial developement "in its applications, by history and criticism;" nor are we willing to defer in this matter to the judgment of Dr. Henry, unless some of the letters of M. Cousin "to the present translator" contain a more full and systematic exposition of the principles of eclecticism, than is to be found in his published writings. There seems to be evidence, that the translator has gained light from some quarter during the interval between the two editions of his work. In the first, when he had received no letters from M. Cousin, he says, "We come now to an important point, —*the fundamental peculiarity* of M. Cousin's system; this is the two-fold developement of reason." He then proceeds to explain the distinction between the spontaneous and reflective reason, which he again tells us, "constitutes and determines the peculiar system of M. Cousin."† But in his second edition we are told, that it is "M. Cousin's attempt to fix the infinite as a positive in knowledge, which constitutes the chief and fundamental peculiarity of his system."‡ And again he says, "The position taken by Cousin upon this subject (the positive idea of the infinite) constitutes the chief pretension and systematic peculiarity of his philosophy."§

* Dr. Henry may have sources of information that are not open to the public. He has taken care not to leave his readers ignorant, that he is in correspondence with M. Cousin. It was hardly necessary to inform the public, that he was "indebted to M. Cousin himself for a copy" of the highly eulogistic memoir from which he has compiled his biographical notices of this philosopher.

† Elements of Psychology, 1st Ed., p. xxi. and xxii.

‡ Ibid., p. xxxi.

§ Ibid., p. 110.

The applications of M. Cousin's philosophy are to us, however, more valuable than the scientific exposition of his principles. The formulas of transcendentalism are, in most cases, as Berkeley styled the vanishing ratios of the modern mathematical analysis, "the mere ghosts of departed quantities"; but, when the truths which they are supposed to contain, are applied to morals and religion, they assume a more substantial form. Here at least we can try the spirits by the test of what we already know to be true. Our only elements for a judgment upon the trackless path of German philosophy are afforded by its line of direction, while within the scope of our vision.

We class M. Cousin with the German school, because the chief part of his philosophy, as far as he has developed it incidentally in its applications to history and criticism, is evidently derived from that source. In a passage already cited by us, he avows his sympathy with a particular contemporary school in Germany, in terms which draw all regards to his personal friend Hegel, and to those of his followers who have attempted to bridge over the gulf between transcendental chaos and the world we live in; and every page of his works shows, that he has been "plunged in the womb of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild." But, mindful of the famous saying of Fontenelle, he has opened just as many fingers of his handful of truth as he finds convenient. He glories in the name of Eclectic, and claims to be the founder of a new school, which is to comprehend and supersede all others. "Our philosophy," he says, "is not a gloomy and fanatical philosophy, which, being prepossessed with a few exclusive ideas, undertakes to reform all others upon the same model: it is a philosophy essentially optimistical, whose only end is to comprehend all, and which therefore accepts and reconciles all." * It is a fundamental position with M. Cousin, that every form of belief that has existed contains within it some truth; and he seems to be equally strong in the faith, that in his philosophical alembic every creed will part with its error. He finds in the eighteenth century four philosophical schools, which he designates as the Sensual, the Ideal, the Skeptical, and the Mystical. Each of these schools has existed, and therefore truth is to be found in each, and can only be entirely obtained

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 416.

by effecting a composition between them all. But where are we to find the test that will separate the elements of truth and error combined in each of these systems? And where the principle of unity which is to group together the particular truths disengaged from each? These can only be found in a new system. But this system, according to M. Cousin's reasoning, as it exists in common with many others, can contain only a portion of truth, and the skimming process must be applied to this in common with the rest. We see no end to this method of exhaustions. M. Cousin's philosophy has in truth no better claim to the name and character of eclectic than any other system. It accepts what agrees with its own principles, and rejects what does not, and this is precisely what every other system does.

If further evidence were wanting of the affectation and charlatanry of this title, it might be abundantly found in the additional reasons which M. Cousin assigns for assuming it. One of these is, that consciousness demands eclecticism. And the case is thus made out. "Being, the me, and the not-me, are the three indestructible elements of consciousness: not only do we find them in the actual developement of consciousness, but we find them in the first facts of consciousness as in the last; and so intimately are they combined with each other, that if you destroy but one of these three elements you destroy all the rest. There you behold *eclecticism* within the limits of consciousness, in its elements, which are all equally real, but which, to form a psychological theory, need all to be combined with each other."* Another reason is, that "even logic demands eclecticism," for all systems of logic turn either upon the idea of cause, or that of substance; and, from the alternate neglect of one or the other of these ideas, we have the "two great systems which at the present day are distinguished by the names of theism and pantheism." Of these systems, the author adds, that "both the one and the other are equally exclusive and false."† Hence even logic demands eclecticism. But the most amusing argument, which M. Cousin urges in behalf of eclecticism is, that which he draws from the spirit and tendencies of the age. We cannot follow him through it, as it is spread over seventeen octavo pages. He rejects from con-

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 418. † Ibid., p. 419.

sideration England and Scotland, on the ground of their lack of philosophy, and pronounces Germany and France to be the only two nations worthy of notice. He passes in review the general state of philosophy and of society in these two nations, declaims upon the French monarchy, the revolution, and the Charte,* — and at length arrives at this conclusion; "If all around us is mixed, complex, and mingled, is it possible, that philosophy should be exempt from the influence of the general spirit? I ask, whether philosophy can avoid being eclectic when all that is around it is so; and whether, consequently, the philosophical reformation which I undertook in 1816, in spite of every obstacle, does not necessarily proceed from the general movement of society throughout Europe, and particularly in France?"† There is something in all this that is either above or below our comprehension. We can readily conceive, that they who see and feel its force, would find no impediment to glorying in the fancied possession of the culled wisdom of all other sects.

Before dismissing this point, it is right that we should hear Dr. Henry's account of the boastful title of the new school in philosophy. "Its *eclectic* character consists precisely in the pretension of applying its own distinctive principles to the criticism of all other systems, discriminating in each its part of truth and its part of error, — and combining the part of truth found in every partial, exclusive, and therefore erroneous system, into a higher, comprehensive system."‡ If we rightly apprehend the writer's meaning here, it involves a strange confusion of ideas. Eclecticism, he maintains, is a distinct, scientific theory, possessing its own method and principles, and of course reduced to a system. And yet its method and principles are applied to all existing

* The following passage, which occurs in this connexion, will give our readers some idea of M. Cousin's method of applying his philosophy to history. "You know, that it is not the masses of population which appear upon fields of battle, but the ideas, the causes, for which they combat. Thus at Leipzig and Waterloo, the ideas which encountered each other were those of paternal monarchy and military democracy. Which prevailed, gentlemen? Neither the one, nor the other. Which was the conqueror? Which was the vanquished at Waterloo? Gentlemen, none was vanquished. No! I protest, that none was vanquished; the only conquerors were European Civilization and the Charte." We assure our readers, that this is a fair average sample.

† Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 440. ‡ Elem. of Psychology, p. xxx.

systems, to gather from them the materials for a higher and comprehensive system, which is to embrace the whole. The test to be applied implies the existence of a philosophical creed, and yet this creed is still to be formed from the parts of truth extracted, by the application of itself, to all others! The system of M. Cousin has, in truth, no more claim to the title of Eclectic, than any other that has ever existed. It is quite as Procustean in its character as others, stretching or lopping off to suit its own dimensions, and differing from them, in this respect, only in its catholic pretensions.

We cannot, for reasons already given, undertake to put our readers in possession of M. Cousin's complete system. But one of its chief peculiarities, in the judgment of Cousin himself, and of his translator, is to be found in the distinction which he draws between the spontaneous and the reflective reason, and this we will endeavour to explain. The fundamental fact of consciousness, according to M. Cousin, is a complex phenomenon, composed of three terms, namely, the *me*, and the *not me*, limited, bounded, finite; then the idea of something different from these, of the infinite, of unity, &c.; and again the relation of the *me* and the *not me*, that is, of the finite to the infinite, which contains and unfolds it: these are therefore the three terms of which the fundamental fact of consciousness is composed. Every man who bends his thoughts inwards, and penetrates only his own consciousness, will find there each of these three elements. If one of these terms is given, the others are given also, nor is it in the power of any man to deny any one of them. Such is now the case, but was it always thus? The distinguishing characteristic of every phenomenon, as now manifested in the consciousness, is the conviction of having tried to deny its truth, and the discovery of an inability to do so. But intelligence could not originally commence with such a denial, seeing that every denial supposes an affirmation of denying. Nor do we commence with reflection, since reflection supposes an operation anterior to itself, and cannot add any terms to those which are given by that operation. Reflection adds itself to that which was, it throws light upon that which is, but it creates nothing. There must have been, therefore, an instinctive developement of intelligence, a perception of truth prior to reflection, and independent of the will, a pure affirmation not yet mingled with any negation.

This primitive intuition contains all that will, at a later period, be contained in reflection : — the *me* and the *not me*,* the infinite and the finite, unity and variety, substance and phenomenon, are contained, though obscurely, in the first flashing forth of spontaneity. This is the spontaneous reason as distinguished from the reflective. The spontaneous reason seizes upon truth at first sight ; comprehends and receives it, without asking why it does so. It is independent of the will, and therefore impersonal. It does not belong to us : though in us, it is not of us, it is not ours. It is absolute, and gives pure truth, and in all men the same truth. But, in the reflective reason, our own voluntary activity is concerned, and here is found the source of difference and error.†

Such is, substantially, M. Cousin's account of the distinction between the spontaneous and the reflective reason. He claims it as a discovery of his own, which he lighted upon "in the recesses of consciousness, and at a depth to which Kant did not penetrate." Kant paused at the apparent relativeness and subjectivity of the laws of thought, but, by diving deeper, M. Cousin "detected and unfolded the fact, instantaneous but real, of the spontaneous perception of truth, — a perception which, not reflecting itself immediately, passes without notice in the interior consciousness, but is the actual basis of that which, at a subsequent period, in a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception."

We can now show the reader the ground which M. Cousin's philosophy affords him for a belief in the objective existence of the world, and God. The system of Kant led to skepticism, inasmuch as it taught, that all the laws of thought are altogether subjective, and the evil consequence was rem-

* We quote M. Cousin's description of a man's finding himself. "We do not commence with seeking ourselves, for this would imply, that we already know that we exist ; but, on a certain day, at a certain hour, at a certain moment, — a moment solemn in existence ! — without having sought ourselves, we find ourselves ; — thought, in its instinctive developement, discloses to us that we are ; we affirm our existence with profound assurance, — with an assurance, unmingled with any negation whatever." — *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 164.

† The preceding account of the two-fold developement of reason is drawn chiefly from the sixth Lecture of the Introduction to the History of Philosophy : it is perhaps a work of supererogation to say, that it is given in the author's own phraseology, though abridged, since we are sure our readers will acquit us of the ability to construct it ourselves.

edied only by assigning an illogical office to the Practical Reason. But M. Cousin has gained the same end, and saved his logic. "All subjectivity expires in the spontaneity of perception. Reason, it is true, becomes subjective by its relation to the free and voluntary *me*, the seat and type of all subjectivity ; but in itself it is impersonal ; it belongs to no one individual rather than another, within the compass of humanity : it belongs not even to humanity itself." Reason therefore being impersonal, it follows that it is absolute, and that the truths it gives are absolute truths. Here is the only resting-place given us for our belief in the objective existence of the finite or the infinite, — the spontaneity, hence the impersonality, and hence the absolute character, of reason. He who does not "possess the strength to penetrate deeply into the recesses of his own mind, to pierce through reflection, (we know not with what instrument,) in order to arrive at the basis of all reflection," or who, when he has arrived at this deep place, is not fortunate enough to find there "a pure affirmation, not yet mingled with any negation, and containing in it all that has subsequently been given by reflection," has no proper evidence for the spontaneity of reason, upon which this solution of the problem of the objective rests. It is to this pure affirmation, sometimes represented as "so pure that it escapes notice," so bright that we cannot see it, that the appeal is made in proof of what is styled the spontaneous reason. We must, therefore, find this "pure affirmation" in our consciousness, or we must admit in deference to M. Cousin's logic, that it exists there, though so brightly that we cannot see it, before we can believe in any objective existence. That is, unless we have strength enough to make the discovery in the recesses of our own minds, a task to which M. Cousin acknowledges that but few men are equal, we must admit, that there exists in our consciousness something of which we are nevertheless not conscious, in order to be satisfied of the objective existence of either the world or God ; and we regard this as so uncertain a path for arriving at certainty, that we believe few on this side of the Atlantic will trust their feet in it :

> "Whom shall we find
> Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
> The dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss,
> And through the palpable obscure find out
> His uncouth way?"

There are some other results of the non-subjectivity of the spontaneous reason, which are more startling. It is the pure affirmation, the spontaneous perception of the reason, which gives us the finite and the infinite. Whence comes this reason which enlightens us, but does not belong to us? "This principle, M. Cousin says, is God, the first and the last principle of all things." Human reason, therefore, "becomes divine in its own eyes." "Reason is literally a revelation, a necessary and universal revelation, which is wanting to no man, and which enlightens every man on his coming into the world. Reason is the necessary mediator between God and man, the Logos of Pythagoras and Plato, the Word made flesh, which serves as the interpreter of God and the teacher of man, divine and human at the same time." There is no hesitation on the part of M. Cousin in drawing from this the conclusion, that "humanity is inspired, — the divine breath which is in it, always and everywhere, reveals to it all truths under one form or another, according to the place and the time." "Every man thinks, every man therefore thinks God, if we may so express it." "Everywhere present, he (God) returns as it were to himself in the consciousness of man, of which he indirectly constitutes the mechanism and phenomenal triplicity by the reflection of his own nature and of the substantial triplicity of which he is the absolute identity." * In human reason there are found three ideas, a triplicity in unity; the infinite, the finite, and the relation which subsists between them; — the passage from these ideas to God, says M. Cousin, is not difficult; "for these ideas are God himself." We earnestly call attention to this, as one of the most hideous heads of the pantheistic hydra. The dogmatic theologians of this sect have put it in the place of the incarnation, and the poets of "young Germany" are teaching the intoxicated youth to regard themselves as sublime realizations of the divine reason. So Schefer, in his passionate verses, designates man as *the Son of God*, as *god-like*, nay, as the *God-man*; and, in a frenzy of self-apotheosis, proceeds to call the human head the *city of the gods!*

But, to resume our thread, as in human consciousness there are found only two ideas and their connexion, forming three

* Elem. of Psychol., p. 400. See Marheineke, Dogm., §§ 229. ff. Bretschneider, *ubi supra*, p. 49.

elements, so in nature, two corresponding laws and their connexion govern the material universe. We find in the world the same triplicity in unity as in ourselves. "The world accordingly is of the same stuff with ourselves, and nature is the sister of man." And here we find in God, man, and the world, the triplicity in unity again, which figures so largely in the Eclectic philosophy. The unity of the three is not obscurely taught in the following passage. "The interior movement of the energies of the world, in the necessary progress of their developement from degree to degree, from kingdom to kingdom, produces that wondrous being, whose fundamental attribute is consciousness, and in this consciousness we have met with precisely the same elements which, subject to different conditions, we had already found to exist in nature ; — the same elements which we had recognised in God himself." * M. Cousin has not permitted the shadow of a doubt to rest upon the pantheistical tendency of his philosophy. "God, he tells us, is at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being substance only in so far as he is cause, and cause only in so far as he is substance ; that is to say, being absolute cause, one and many, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end, and centre, at the summit of being, and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple in a word, that is to say, at the same time, God, nature, and humanity. In fact, if God be not every thing, he is nothing, if he be absolutely indivisible in himself, he is inaccessible ; and consequently he is incomprehensible, and his incomprehensibility is for us the same as his destruction." † M. Cousin has attempted to forestall the charge of pantheism, by pronouncing it the bugbear of feeble imaginations. This is a very common, and not a very creditable artifice. But we trust that there is, in our country at least, enough of this feebleness of imagination to be affrighted by the bugbear, and to shrink back with horror from such a philosophical aliment as is offered by an infidel philosophy ; and the more so when we see, in every new arrival of European journals, that there is scarcely a doctrine of orthodox Christianity, on which these harpies have not descended,

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 158.
† Elem. of Psychol., p. 399.

claiming it as their own, and so defiling it by impious misuse, as to give us poison under the shape of food.

No sincere and earnest inquirer after truth, humble and reverent in his self-distrust, as he must needs be, can fail to take offence at the bold and confident tone in which M. Cousin settles all questions; and especially will the pious mind recoil from his unhallowed intrusions upon the nature and essence of the Diety. He professes, indeed, to believe and teach the existence of God. He professes too, sad omen at the outset, thoroughly to comprehend his nature and essence. He does not pretend to deny, he pleads guilty to, the accusation of seeking "to penetrate into the depths of the Divine Essence, which common opinion declares to be incomprehensible."* "So little is God incomprehensible, that his *nature* is constituted by ideas, — by *those* ideas whose nature it is to be intelligible." "The measure of the comprehensibility of God is the measure of human faith." They who falter and draw back from this rushing in of fools, where angels dare not tread, are reproached with "pusillanimous mysticism." He admits, that God "is incomprehensible as a formula, and in the schools," but we should consider that "mysticism is the necessary form of all religion," — "the symbolical and mystical form is inherent in religion," — and, "to speak plainly, the religious form and the philosophical form are different from each other." Though religion, therefore, must of necessity present truths under a mysterious and incomprehensible form, it is the right of philosophy to penetrate this form, and disengage the ideas; it is its duty "to comprehend nothing and to admit nothing but in so far as it is true in itself and in the form of ideas." God exists only so far as we comprehend him. His nature is constituted by ideas, and those ideas are wholly within the stretch and compass of our reason. "I will speak," says our author, "plainly and unequivocally upon this point. *Mystery* is a word which belongs not to the vocabulary of philosophy, but to that of religion." †

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 132

† Ibid., p. 134. There is an admirable contrast between the pert self-sufficiency of M. Cousin, and the humble, truth-loving spirit of the illustrious Descartes, who is honored and lauded as the author of the Psychological Method, and the founder of the Ideal School of Philosophy. Cousin calls himself one of the sons of Descartes. Degenerate son of a

With this for his point of departure, it is not surprising that M. Cousin should be led to reject entirely the God of the Scriptures, and substitute in his stead a shadowy abstraction. In place of the mysterious and incomprehensible Jehovah, whose infinite perfections will be the study and delight of an eternity, we have a God whose nature and purposes we can now, while seeing through a glass darkly, perfectly comprehend, and to whom faith is not permitted to ascribe any thing of excellence or glory beyond what the human intellect can clearly discern. In place of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God to whom his people, in all ages, have fled for refuge, crying, Do *Thou* deliver me and save me, we are presented with a vague personification of abstract principles, with a God who is described as the reason; thought, with its fundamental moments; space, time, and number; the substance of the ego, or the true personality, and of the fatal *not me*, or nature; who returns to himself in the consciousness of man; of whose divine essence all the moments pass into the world, and return into the consciousness of man; who is every thing, and, it might with equal significancy be added, nothing.

With this notion of God, no one will contradict the position

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with one's. Compare the modest vaulting of the one with the all-embracing complacency of the other. "Quod si satis tuto et sine erroris periculo aggrediuntur se nobis veluti ad speculum, et semper quam certissime reperiemus, et in ipsa pervenire omnes suas voluptates, et non amplius fallitur. Ita si fiat bonus Deus ille ipse, qui ullo, eloquio revelet, quod naturalem ingenii sensu nemo cognoscit, quale non sunt mysteria Incarnationis et Trinitatis, non recusemus ne simplex, quidem non alere intelligemus; nec ullo modo contemnemus credere, quae in immensa ejus natura, tum etiam in rebus in ea creatis, non captum nostrum excedant." — *Princ. Phil.*, § xxv.

Another truly great man, of the same age, in urging the use of reason in theology, addresses to those who employ this noble talent in all other matters, but bids it make a basket when they come to the study of God and of his word, the expostulation, "Cave, cave, ne quendam e te rigide sola ratione exigentes non male colligendi tui talenti." But he immediately adds, "Imo quam saepius, nec opus est ut moneas, plurima nos, quae Deus in verbo suo nobis revelavit, captum nostrum infinites superantia quaestiones, ut de Trinitate, de Christo, de SS. Trinitate, de aeterna generatione filii, de spiritus sancti processione, de resurrectione mortuorum, — haec omnia credenda, credo, et non solum ita semper credam, quia ea revelare mihi dignatus est." — *Melanchthon, Opera*, Vol. I. p. 190.

We could quote much to the same effect from Leibnitz, to whom M. Cousin does homage as "the greatest authority among modern philosophers." These were men who were seeking, with passionate earnestness, after truth; they were not founding new schools in philosophy. They were men of large powers and large attainments, and could afford to confess ignorance, where it is folly to be wise.



frequently assumed by M. Cousin, that Atheism is impossible. Who can deny the existence of reason, of thought, of the world? And, if he cannot deny these, he cannot deny God, for these are God. It is substantially upon this ground that M. Cousin rests the impossibility of Atheism. "Every man believes in his own existence, every man, therefore, believes in the existence of the world and God. Every man thinks, every man, therefore, thinks God. Every human proposition contains God; every man who speaks, speaks of God, and every word is an act of faith and a hymn. Every assertion, even though negative, is a judgment which contains the idea of being, and consequently, *God in his fullness.*" * To the same effect we are told, "that all thought implies a spontaneous faith in God, and natural Atheism has no existence." Every man who believes that he exists, believes all that is necessary. "If he believes this, I am satisfied; for, if he believes that he exists, he then believes that his thought, — that he believes his existence, — is worthy of faith; he therefore places faith in the principle of his thought; — now, *there* is God." † Even the skeptic, who doubts every thing, is not to be brought as an objection to this doctrine. For does he deny that he denies? Does he doubt that he doubts? If he only affirms that he doubts, in that affirmation there is included faith in himself and in God. Behold, then, all men converted into believers, — respect humanity, for all its members acknowledge the same God; — impute atheism to no man, for every man speaks, and each word is an act of faith in God; every man believes his own consciousness, and it is in human consciousness that God returns to himself; "human consciousness is like the divine essence, which it manifests." Such is the practical conclusion of this philosophy. And we admit its justness. It is logically connected with the premises. With the notion of God given us by M. Cousin, Atheism is indeed impossible. And so is it impossible under any scheme of idolatry, which assumes an object in the existence of which all men must of necessity believe, as its God. The African, having established that his *fetish* is God, will have no difficulty in proving that all men, or as many at least as believe in the evidence of their senses, believe in God. Atheism is a term, that bears relation to the

* Elem. of Psych., pp. 401, 402. † Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 174.

true God revealed in the Bible, to the God that is found under the "venerable form of religion," and the philosophy that approaches this form to disengage the idea of God, and change it to a new one, though it comes with many expressions of "profound respect and veneration," and with all the deferential and smirking politeness of a French *petit-maître*, is essentially atheistic in its character, and as such should be held in equal abhorrence with the open and frontless denial of God. M. Cousin, to do him justice, never fails in polite respect towards religion: he even refers, with evident approbation, to the pious politeness "of the octogenary author of the *Système du Monde*, (*an Atheist*,) who bowed and uncovered his head, whenever God was named." But when a man robs us of our God, it is but little matter whether he does it with an open and rude violence, or with a smooth and complaisant legerdemain.

The idea of creation is of necessity modified by the idea of God. What is it to create? After stating and repudiating the "vulgar definition, which is, to make something out of nothing," M. Cousin proceeds to seek the true conception of this act among the facts of consciousness. "To create," he says, "is a thing which it is not difficult to conceive, for it is a thing which we do at every moment; in fact, we create whenever we perform a free action. — Here is the type of a creation. The divine creation is the same in its nature. God, if he is a cause, can create; and, if he is an absolute cause, he cannot but create; and in creating the universe he does not draw it forth from nothingness, but from himself. God therefore creates, he creates by virtue of his creative power; he draws forth the world not from nothingness, which is not, but from him who is absolute existence. An absolute creative force, which cannot but pass into act, being eminently his characteristic, it follows, not that creation is possible, but that it is necessary; it follows, that God is creating without cessation, and infinitely, and that creation is inexhaustible, and sustains itself constantly." * M. Cousin, on one occasion, intimates, that he knows "he is speaking in 1828, and not in 1850," and we presume a decent regard for the prejudices of the age in which his lot is cast, prevented him from stating an immediate inference from the

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., pp. 136 – 142.

principles here laid down. If it be the most eminent characteristic of God, that he is an absolute creative force, that cannot but pass into act, we are driven to believe in the eternal creation of the world, or rather in the eternal co-existence and oneness of God and the universe. The possibility of a creation, in the strict and proper sense of the term, is denied by M. Cousin, at the outset. He says, that "Leucippus, Epicurus, Bayle, and Spinoza, and, indeed, all others whose powers of thought are somewhat exercised, demonstrate, that out of nothing, nothing can be drawn forth; that out of nothing, nothing can come forth; whence it follows, that creation is impossible. Yet by pursuing a different route, our investigations arrive at this very different result, viz., that creation is, I do not say, possible, but necessary." And what is this different route which conducts from the same premises to so opposite a conclusion? It is, as we have seen, by changing the meaning of the word. It is by narrowing the term to signify only what we every moment do, what every cause, now in action, does. By confounding creation with causation, and defining God to be a creative force, that could not but pass into act, either Leucippus or Spinoza might have proved, as clearly as M. Cousin has done, that creation, so far from being impossible, is both possible and necessary. That they did not arrive at this "different result," should be imputed perhaps rather to their candor, than to their want of penetration.

If the maxima "nihil posse creari de nihilo" be received as universally true, and applied in limitation of the Divine power, as well as human, creation is of course impossible. Creation is the making of something out of nothing, and, if this cannot be done, there can be no creation. We find matter now in existence. Unless it has existed eternally, there was a time when it did not exist. It must, then, have been formed either of something already existing, which by hypothesis is not matter, that is, of spirit, or it must have been formed of nothing. But matter cannot be a modified form of spiritual existence, and, according to M. Cousin, it cannot be drawn forth from nothing. The only legitimate conclusion to which we can arrive from these premises is, that matter does not now exist, or that it has had an independent existence from eternity, or that it is an emanation from the Deity. The latter opinion seems to be the one held by

M. Cousin. The material universe, he teaches us, was not formed out of nothing; — God drew it forth from himself. "We may," he says, "go further. The creations of God are from himself; therefore he creates with all the characteristics which we have recognised in him, and which pass *necessarily* into his creation." * We find, too, the following passage in his preface to the second edition of the Philosophical Fragments, translated by Dr. Henry, and appended to the "Elements of Psychology." "God exists for us only in the relation of cause; without this, reason would not refer to him either humanity or the world. He is absolute substance only inasmuch as he is absolute cause; and his *essence* consists precisely in his creative power." † M. Cousin's theory of Cosmogony is now quite plain. The essence of God is his creative power. He is an absolute force, subjected to a necessity of acting, and of developing in its effects those characteristics, and those alone, which are found in itself. God is made the mere living force, the *vis viva*, of the universe, and all things are but the radiations and effluxes of this primary and interior energy. This is the theory taught, if we may credit the Hermetic Fragments, by the ancient Egyptians, and which is at this day held both by the Brahmins and Buddhists of the East. Among all the ancients, unless the Tuscans be an exception, the creation of something out of nothing was held to be a palpable absurdity. It was a common article in all the different creeds of Grecian and Roman philosophy, that "gigni de nihilo nil, in nihilum nil posse reverti." This led to two different theories of the origin of the visible universe, either of them exclusive of a creation, properly so called. The one, that of most of the Greek schools, which taught the eternity, and independent existence, of matter. The other, that of the Oriental systems, which represented the universe as an emanation from within the Deity. Thus in the "Yajur Veid," as translated by Du Perron, it is said: "The whole universe is the Creator, proceeds from the Creator, exists in him, and returns to him. The ignorant assert that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing. Oh, ye whose hearts are pure, how could something be made out of nothing? This first Being alone, and without like-

* Introd., p. 142. † Elem. of Psych., p. 408.

ness, was the *all* in the beginning; he could multiply himself under different forms; he created fire from his essence, which is light," &c. This doctrine was early carried into Greece, and adopted by many of their philosophers. It is found in the Orphic remains, especially in the poem *de Mundo*, as quoted by Aristotle and Proclus, in Æschylus, and in most of the Greek poets. It seems to have special affinities for poetry. In modern times it has made its reappearance in the polished periods of Pope's "Essay on Man," and it runs through the wild and impious imaginations of Shelley.* Under the poetic dress this system is more tolerable, because we can ordinarily make such deductions for poetic imagery as will bring it within the compass of truth. But when, in the grave language of didactic philosophy we are told, that the very essence of God is his creative power; that he is a force that was compelled to act and to pass with all his characteristics into the visible world; and that nothing now exists which has not from eternity existed in God; we are concerned, we are alarmed. This necessary transfusion of God into the universe destroys our very idea of God.† He is made the substratum, the substance, of all existence; and we are only bubbles thrown up upon the bosom of the mighty ALL, to reflect the rainbow colors, in our brief phenomenal existence, and then be absorbed again into the ocean from which we came.‡.

It will have been already anticipated from the exposition we have given, that M. Cousin's philosophy makes sad havoc with Christianity. He is, indeed, studiously polite to Christianity as well as to natural religion. "He knows, that he is speaking in 1828, and not in 1850." This knowledge, it is, doubtless, that draws from him his kind and forbearing in-

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* Wordsworth occasionally borders on the very extreme of poetic license upon this subject. The philosophical principles of the "Essay on Man," were dictated by Bolingbroke, and it is supposed that Pope was not himself sufficiently aware of their tendency.

† If La Place had only personified under the name of God, the forces with which the attenuated matter of his *nebular* hypothesis was supposed to be endowed, he might, with as much justice as M. Cousin, have escaped the imputation of Atheism.

‡ The fittest symbolical form, that has ever been given to this creed, is that of an Oriental sect, who represent the Deity as an immense spider, seated at the centre of the universe, and spinning forth all things from his own body.

dulgence towards Christianity, — his patience with its slowness of movement, — nay, his condescending patronage. "Christianity is the philosophy of the people. He who now addresses you sprang from the people, and from Christianity; and I trust you will always recognise this, in my profound and tender respect for all that is of the people and of Christianity. Philosophy is patient; she knows what was the course of events in former generations, and she is full of confidence in the future; happy in seeing the great bulk of mankind in the arms of Christianity, she offers, with modest kindness, to assist her in ascending to a yet loftier elevation." * And again, he says, "I believe that in Christianity all truths are contained; but these eternal truths may and ought to be approached, disengaged, and illustrated by philosophy. Truth has but one foundation; but truth assumes two forms, mystery, and scientific exposition; I revere the one, I am the organ and interpreter of the other." † Infidelity has, in most cases, assumed this guise of philosophical explanation of the truths of Christianity. Hume proposed only to place faith upon its proper foundation; and even Voltaire and the French Encyclopedists professed to be rendering true service to Christianity, while they were seeking to sap its foundations and overwhelm it with utter ruin. But unless it be to blind the eyes, and evade the arm, of the ecclesiastical power, which in Catholic countries holds watch over the press, we see not what good purpose can be effected by so thin a disguise as that assumed by M. Cousin.‡ He surely cannot imagine, that the most ordinary intelligence could fail to penetrate the flimsy hypocrisy. He comes down from the heights of philosophy, to meet Christianity in her helplessness, and aid her in ascending to a loftier elevation! Though tolerant of her past slowness, yet, knowing that she must move more rapidly to meet the wants of the

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 57. † Ibid., p. 442.

‡ Among those whom we look to as readers of such articles as this, there are some who are turning their steps to the enchanted ground of German literature, either in its primitive or its secondary and Gallicized division. Let us, with all the earnestness of disinterested dread, caution the young American. Under the disguises of romance and poesy, he will learn to tolerate the hell-born dogmas of the *young Germany;* the mingled lust and blasphemy of Heine, Pückler Muskau, and Schefer; or, if he wander in these domains as a theologian, the Iscariot Christianity of the disciples of Schelling, Hegel, and Daub.

future, he comes, with modest kindness, to disburden her of her mysteries, and quicken her steps! He presents himself as an interpreter, in scientific exposition, of a revelation from God, and the canon which he brings in his hand and openly exposes, is to admit nothing which this revelation contains as truth, unless, by falling back upon our own pure reason, we find it to be true in itself and in the form of ideas! In his solution of the mystery of the Incarnation, in which Reason is declared to be the Word made flesh, we have both proof and warning of the kind of assistance which Christianity may expect at his hands. All the sacred mysteries of revelation dwindle, in like manner, under his profane touch, into the stale truths of our own consciousness. Locke encounters the sneers of M. Cousin, because he had not discovered this mode of making Christianity easy. Speaking of the appeals made by Locke to Christianity, to revelation, and to faith, he says, "By faith, however, and by revelation, he does not understand a philosophical faith and revelation. This interpretation did not exist in the age of Locke. He understands faith and revelation, in the proper orthodox, theological sense."* If we have a just idea of the temper of Locke, he would have scorned to avail himself of this slippery and deceptive interpretation. It is an ungracious task to be alarmists, and we should shun the office, if only some specialties of this or that sect were at stake, and not, as we believe, the very basis of all religion and morals. Socinianism is evangelical, when compared with the newest theology of Germany.

M. Cousin's patronage of Christianity becomes sometimes ludicrous. He declares, with gravity, that "it is the best of all religions, and it is the most accomplished of all." He assigns a reason for its accomplishments. It is this, "that the Christian religion is that which of all other religions came last; and it is unreasonable to suppose, that the religion which came last should not be better than all others, should not embrace and resume them all."† The perfectibility of the human species is a cardinal doctrine with M. Cousin. Humanity is ever in the right; and its progress is steadily onward and upward. Each age is an improvement on its predecessor, and every new system is superior to all that

* Elem. of Psych., p. 213. † Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 339.

have gone before it. The inferiority of Christianity will therefore be demonstrated, should the general apostasy, which some predict, take place after its universal prevalence.

We need not seek, in the remote deductions and results of M. Cousin's philosophy, for evidence of its irreconcilable hostility to Christianity. In its first principles it overthrows the foundation of divine revelation. The spontaneous reason, we are told by M. Cousin, is God, and the truths given by it are "literally a revelation from God." And since this reason is found in all men, "humanity is inspired." The original fact of affirmation, which is found by M. Cousin in human consciousness, beneath reflection, and anterior to all negation, and upon which he relies for proof of the existence of the spontaneous reason, "this fact it is, which the human race have agreed to call inspiration." This inspiration is attended always by enthusiasm. "It is the spirit of God with us; it is immediate intuition, as opposed to induction and demonstration; it is the primitive spontaneity opposed to the ulterior developement of reflection."* As neither the senses nor the will are concerned in this primitive act of pure apperception, we cannot refer it to ourselves. Therefore, "when man is conscious of the wondrous fact of inspiration and enthusiasm, feeling himself unable to refer it to himself, he refers it to God; and gives to this original and pure affirmation the name of revelation. Is the human race wrong?† When man, conscious of his feeble intervention in the fact of inspiration, refers to God the truths which he has not made, and which rule over him, does he deceive himself? No, certainly not; for what is God? I have told you; he is thought in itself, with its fundamental momenta; he is eternal reason, the substance and the cause of the truths which man perceives. When man, therefore, refers to God that truth which he cannot refer either to this world, or to his own personality, he refers it to him to whom he ought to refer it; and this absolute affirmation of truth, without reflection, — this

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* Elem. of Psych., p. 301.

† The deification of collective humanity is regarded by many in Germany as the regenerative principle of our age. The fashionable pantheism of Berlin teaches, that "whatever is (in politics) is right"; a blessed creed for the courtiers of an absolute monarch; and which, when applied to morals, forbids us, as does a living poet, to dim our mind's eye with any tears of penitence; for all hatred is only love seen on the wrong side!

inspiration, — enthusiasm, — is veritable revelation." * All men are inspired, and all are inspired in an equal degree. This spontaneity of reason, which is to all men a veritable revelation from God, "does not admit of essential differences." It gives pure truth, and in all men the same truth. "Everywhere, in its instinctive and spontaneous form, reason is equal to itself, in all the generations of humanity, and in all the individuals of which these different generations are composed." † It is too plain for argument, that these principles destroy all that is peculiar and valuable in the Sacred Scriptures. The distinctive claim which they put forth, of containing a revelation from God, is set aside by a similar claim on behalf of every man. Humanity is inspired in all its members, and revelations of truth are made to all men in nearly equal degree. When holy men of God spake of old, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, they were but giving utterance to the visions of the spontaneous reason, and the truths declared by Christ and his Apostles were from God only in the same sense in which all our own intuitions of truth are from God. The Koran is of equal authority with the Bible; all pretended revelations have one and the same authority, that is, the self-evidence of the truths which they contain. The Gospel of Christ is thus stripped of its high prerogative as a special message from God; and holy prophets and apostles, nay, our Saviour too, were deceived in supposing that they had any other kind of communication with God, than that which every man enjoys. No special revelation could, according to this philosophy, be accredited to the world. No messenger or interpreter could be furnished for a divine mission among men. The truths revealed to any one man, through the operations of his instinctive reason, and by him proclaimed to others, cannot be received except by such as find the same truths in their own spontaneity of reason. And the only way, therefore, by which God could make known his will, and give it authority among men, would be by enlarging the spontaneous reason of every man. At precisely this point the extremes of flat Rationalism, and the philosophy of the Absolute, come together. Their osculation is seen in Strauss's "Life of Jesus," which has almost

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., pp. 165, 166.
† Ibid., p. 174.

convulsed the religious world in Germany. Marheineke and Röhr, like Herod and Pilate, agree only when the Son of God is to be crucified. Would to God, that our fellow Christians in America, before abandoning as shallow the philosophy of the great English fathers, would take the trouble to examine the issues of the paths on which they are entering! Let us have any philosophy, however shallow, that leaves us in quiet possession of the Gospel, rather than the dark and hopeless bewilderment into which we are thrown by the deep metaphysics of M. Cousin. We say to him and to Dr. Henry, in the language of Edmund Burke, "If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on infidelity to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incense, than the infectious stuff, which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics."

They who are accustomed to look to the sanctions of religion for the chief support of morality, will naturally surmise, that M. Cousin is not unduly strict in his ethical code. When God is made to be thought, reason, space, time, and number, there is not much room left for the commission of any serious offences against him. If humanity is inspired, there is no reason to doubt that humanity will always be in the right. We accordingly find, that, under the cheerful philosophy of M. Cousin, it is a crime to "blaspheme humanity." Forms of government or of religion which have extensively prevailed could not have subsisted without the consent of humanity; and, though it is our privilege to criticize, we are taught that it would be wrong to condemn them. The spirit of each particular age, the temper of each system of philosophy, in short, every thing which has existed through the concurrence of humanity, is right; "it has its apology in its existence." We are warned not to "accuse humanity," by condemning religious or political laws, which have had the confidence and sympathy of the masses of mankind. "To imprecate power (long and lasting power), we are told, is to blaspheme humanity; to bring accusations against glory, is nothing less than to bring accusations against humanity, by which it is decreed. What is glory, gentlemen? It is the judgment of humanity upon its members;

and humanity is always in the right." * No appeal can be taken from the judgment of humanity, for "its judgment is infallible." †

We are thus led to a conclusion, which M. Cousin does not scruple to avow and apply, that success is the criterion of moral excellence. He sets it down as "the peculiar characteristic of a great man, that he succeeds." He proves that in every battle which has ever taken place, "the vanquished party deserved to be vanquished, — that the victorious party was the better, the more moral party; and that therefore it was victorious." ‡ This singular demonstration may be summed up in a single sentence, which we extract. "Courage is a virtue which has a right to the recompense of victory; — weakness is a vice, and, inasmuch as it is so, it is always punished and beaten." § Examination and reflection, we are told, will convince us, in every case, that "the vanquished ought to have been vanquished," and that our sympathy and applause should be "on the side of the victor, for his is the better cause."

We have never seen the odious maxim, "Whatever is, is right," pressed to a more insane extent, than is given to it in M. Cousin's philosophy. It is this abominable principle which breathes into his system the cheerful inspiration, upon which he so much loves to dwell. We may, indeed, thus learn to be cheerful under any aspect of affairs, we may bow the knee to any religion, we may cordially embrace any form of government, we may shout in the procession of any conqueror, we may rejoice with the successful oppressor, and insult the oppressed with the truth, that he deserves to suffer, — but at what expense do we purchase this easy and cheerful temper! What a sacrifice of the tender charities of our nature, what a dreadful perversion of truth and conscience, does it involve! We must first learn to believe, what M. Cousin, indeed, distinctly teaches, that prudence, courage, and strength, though united with ambition, revenge, cruelty, and rapacity, constitute a moral excellence that deserves to triumph over imprudence and weakness, though associated with the greatest mildness, forbearance, and benevolence. We

* Introd., p. 309. † Ibid., p. 310. ‡ Ibid., p. 282.
§ Ibid., p. 283.

would rather weep sometimes with those that weep, than have our tears thus stayed.

There is to us a dark and dreary fatalism pervading M. Cousin's system, of which symptoms have already appeared in the extracts we have given. He does not, indeed, teach what is commonly meant by fatalism. He is a strenuous advocate for the freedom of the will, and talks much of our free personality. But then this freedom itself is but one of the products of a deeper fatalism, which pervades the universe, and works out its results in all things. The mechanical theory of the French atheists, which was the product of the philosophy of sensation, and the ideal theory of the Transcendentalists, arrive, in this respect, though by different routes, at much the same conclusion. And, though each brings with it somewhat of the dust of the road by which it has come, there is not much to choose between them. The one is, indeed, more refined and *spiritual* than the other. We hear less of the working and grinding of the machinery. It is an abstract and ideal mechanism to which it subjects us, but still a mechanism. All things are moved on by a resistless destiny. Even God is represented as a creative force, which could not but pass into act. And again, we are told, "God could not remain in a state of absolute unity; that absolute unity, that eternal substance, being a creative force, could not but create."* Cousin teaches us, that every man who exists is but the exponent of some preëxisting necessity; that every book that is written is but the realization of an idea that must needs take this form, and that every thing which occurs represents an idea which could not but be represented at that precise time, and in that very manner. After a full exposition of the *a priori* demand for a Universal History, he concludes, "hence the necessity of Bossuet." The idea had been ripening for some time, and at length there was an imperative necessity for it to put on a concrete form, and it immediately assumed it in the person of the Bishop of Meaux. Nor is this all. It was not only necessary that Bossuet should come into existence at this precise moment, and that he should write a Universal History, but his plan also was subject to necessity. After a full account of the *a priori* urgency of an idea upon this subject, we are

* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 303.

told, "Hence, gentlemen, the necessity of Bossuet's plan." We have then an account of the necessity which called into being and set at work in their respective functions, Vico, Herder, Tennemann, and others. It would seem as if there had been some difficulty in finding concrete habitation for the abstract necessities of the Cartesian philosophy. Descartes himself was the product of a necessity, which grew out of the dependence and subjection of the scholastic systems. It was necessary that there should be a revolution, in which reason might shake off the shackles of authority and enter upon the true method of philosophizing. And Descartes came to represent this idea. But then Descartes was a gentleman and a soldier; Malebranche was a monk, Berkeley an eminent bishop, Spinoza a recluse, and Leibnitz a statesman. There was therefore a necessity, in the Cartesian philosophy, for a great professor; "this was the place and destiny of Wolf." *

There is a wider domain, and a stricter rule, given by M. Cousin, to this destiny, than is conceded by most even of fatalists. Not only do all men, and especially great men, represent ideas which it was necessary should find their representation in them, but "every place represents an idea." There is nothing in the world which has not its necessity for existing, and which does not therefore represent an idea. "Yes! gentlemen, says our author, give me the map of any country, its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, and the whole of its physical geography; give me its natural productions, its flora, its zoology, &c., and I pledge myself to tell you, *a priori*, what will be the quality of man in that country, and what part its inhabitants will act in history, — not accidentally but necessarily, not at any particular epoch, but in all; in short, — what idea he is called to represent." The philosophy which denies, that all things hold and bind each other together, which emancipates man in any degree from the laws of brass and iron which work so effectually upon him even through nature, that "the existence of a particular country determines the existence of a particular

* Introd., p. 240. The inference is obvious: there still remained a necessity in the philosophy of the age for a "peer of France." Quere: Does the same principle of necessary emanation from the age and circumstances hold in the case of translations? Or could M. Cousin, by an inverse method, declare the horoscope of his admirers?

people," is branded as a "sentimental and pusillanimous spiritualism, which, though well enough adapted to the minds of children and of women, would not be less fatal to science than materialism itself." *

M. Cousin has a reason, aside from the principles of his philosophy, for being a fatalist. "All great men," he says, "have been fatalists." And as he has provided the way, in all other respects, for his being a great man, it would hardly answer for him to fail here. "A great man," he informs us, "is a general idea, concentrated in a strong individuality, so that its generality may appear without suppressing his individuality." From this definition of a great man, he infers, that no priest, prophet, or pontiff, can be great, since their existence consists in their relation to the God whom they announce: with them "God is every thing, and man is nothing;" "sacerdotal castes destroy individuality, for in them nothing appears but the name of the caste, and the name of the caste is the name of its God." Therefore it appears, that no priest, and, by parity of reason, no religious man, in whom the idea of the infinite prevails over the finite, and to whom "God is every thing, and man nothing," can be a great man. War and philosophy are the only two lines of life which are favorable to the developement of great men. "Who are they," he asks, "who have left the greatest names among men? They are those who have done their countrymen the greatest good, who have served them most effectually; that is, who have made the greatest conquests for the ideas, which in their century were called to dominion, and which then represented the destinies of civilization; that is, *who have gained the most battles.*" † But M. Cousin is not a warrior, except in the bloodless conflict of ideas, and it would not do to limit greatness to war. We have, in consequence, another demonstration, concluding, "Therefore the great philosopher is, in his time and in his country, the ultimate perfection of all other great men, and, together with the great captain, he is the most complete representation of the people to whom he belongs." ‡ The way is therefore open to M. Cousin. But it is "the peculiar mark of a great man that he succeeds." And M. Cousin has succeeded; for the "name of eclecticism, whether chosen well or ill, begins

* Introd., p. 242. † Ibid., p. 321. ‡ Ibid., p. 323.

for some time since to be somewhat spread abroad, and to resound in France and elsewhere." * Does not all the world, too, know, that M. Cousin has been made a Peer of France. Without doubt, he has succeeded. What is further necessary? Why, "all great men have in a greater or less degree been fatalists." † And he has given sufficient proof, that he labors under no lack of this qualification.

Let us again pause for a little season, and, looking back upon our dreary way, take in at one retrospective survey so much of the field as may include the German, the French, and the mongrel philosophies. They are districts of the same kingdom; alike in arrogance, in nonsense, and in impiety.

Campbell has a chapter in his "Philosophy of Rhetoric," intended to point out the cause of the fact, that nonsense so often escapes being detected, both by the writer and by the reader; but he did not live to see what we have seen. Grosser absurdities than those which may be selected from the German, and the mock-German metaphysics, we believe the world never beheld; and these not in scattered places, but for page after page, and chapter after chapter. The Germans of the Transcendental School complain, that we of the Anglo-Saxon race are dull, terrestrial, and shallow; their defect is equally unfortunate, for no one of them has the faculty for descrying an absurdity, as such. The grossest and most drivelling nonsense, which could be expressed in a jargon of words, would probably to a transcendentalist exhibit nothing ridiculous, and perhaps something august. Except the Philosophy of the Absolute, few things can be imagined more ludicrously and disgustingly absurd than the revelations of Böhme, or Jacob Behmen, as we more familiarly call him. Yet these ravings of the inspired shoemaker are regarded with "affectionate reverence," ‡ not only by Schelling but by Coleridge; and, more amazing still, have conduced, in no small degree, to the production of the modern philosophy, as has been proved and acknowledged. §

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* Introd., p. 414. † Ibid., p. 305.

‡ Thus Coleridge speaks of Jacob Behmen, Biogr. Liter., Vol. I. p. 96; see also p. 90. — Baur's Gnosis, pp. 557 – 611. — Heinroth: von d. Grundfehlern der Erziehung, 1828, p. 415.

§ We observe two new biographies of Jacob Böhme, among the latest German works.

In the land of their prevalence, these systems have been frequently compared to the dreams of the early Gnostics, and the resemblance is too striking to escape any one versed in church history ; as has been to our knowledge admitted by some of those concerned. The very name *Gnosis* reminds one of the claim to direct knowledge of the absolute ; but the parallel may be carried out in almost every particular of the two classes of opinion. This has been done in a profound manner by the learned Baur, in his work on the Gnosis of the Christian church. He has traced out at full length the horrid pictures of the Valentinians and the Ophites ; of Marcion and the admirers of the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies ; he has set over against this the portraiture of Böhme, of Fichte, of Schelling, and of Hegel ; and, comparing their respective lineaments, has revealed a likeness as striking as it is frightful. This he does, moreover, not as an enemy, but as an adoring devotee of the new theogony. He shows the remarkable coincidence between Schelling and Böhme, and between both and the Gnostics ; and he makes the analogy no less apparent in the case of Hegel. * In all these schemes, the initiated are incited to an esoteric vision of truth, a Gnosis which the common herd cannot attain : in all, the promise is, "Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The conflicting sects agree in this, and in a consequent contempt for what they call popular, experimental, or empirical philosophy.† As there are certain limits to intellectual powers, which the immortal Locke endeavoured to ascertain, and beyond which we float in the region of midnight, so those who have forgotten these cautions have in their most original speculations only reproduced the delirium of other times, which in the cycle of opinion has come back

* Die christliche Gnosis, oder die christliche Religions-Philosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwickelung. Von Dr. Ferdinand Christian Baur. Tübingen, 1835. — In this elaborate work of Professor Baur, nearly two hundred pages are devoted to the exhibition of the parallel between the modern seers, and the frantic Ophites and other transcendentalists of the primitive age. Let the reader suspend his judgment until he shall have inquired into the justice of this comparison.

† Hegel gives himself great amusement at the English acceptation of the word *Philosophy*. He alludes to Lord Brougham's having, in a speech in Parliament, spoken of "the *philosophical* principles of free-trade." He attributes a similar expression to Canning ; and gives the following as the title of a recent English book, viz. "The Art of Preserving the Hair, on *Philosophical* Principles." — Hegel's *Encyklopaedie*, pp. 11, 12.

upon us "like a phantasma or a hideous dream." * In the French imitation, no less than the German original, there is a perpetual self-delusion practised by the philosopher, who plays with words as a child with lettered cards, and combines what ought to be the symbols of thought, into expressions unmeaning and self-contradictory.† And as in this operation he cannot but be aware, that these expressions are the exponents of no conceptions of the intellect, he demands, as the only possible prop of his system, a specific faculty for the absolute, the unconditioned, and — may we not add ? — the absurd ! Thus Fichte asked of all such as would aspire to his primary, free, and creative act of the *Ich* or *Ego*, a certain power called the *Anschauungsvermögen*. It is the want of these optics, alas ! which spoils us for philosophers. Reinhold, who often combated, and sometimes rallied, his old friend, avowed, that he was utterly destitute of this sense, a misfortune, adds M. Degerando, common to him with all the rest of the world.‡ It is, however, the happy portion of the absolute Philosophers, the Behmenites, the Gnostics, the Soofies, the Buddhists, and a few of the Americans.

It would afford a subject for many more pages than we can allot to this whole discussion, to compare the new philosophy with that of the Oriental mystics. We look with amazement at the exact reproduction of almost every Eastern error in the musings of Europe. It should seem, that no form of profane absurdity can ever finally die out of the world, until the great suggester of them all shall be cast into hell. Pantheism has by some been regarded as the mother of polytheism ; but mother and daughter have loved to dwell

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* When we look at the prodigious speculations of the schoolmen, we find expressions highly transcendental. Even Hegel is shorn of his originality, and pantheism is discovered among the lucubrations of the dark ages. Thus, Joannes Erigena says of the divine nature : "Deus est omne quod vere est ; quoniam ipse facit omnia, et fit in omnibus ; omne enim quod intelligitur et sentitur, nihil aliud est, nisi non apparentis apparitio, occulti manifestatio, negati affirmatio," etc. — *De Divisione Naturæ*, lib. ii. p. 80. Here we have pantheism. Again, "Per nihilum ex quo omnia creata esse scriptura dicit, intelligo ineffabilem et incomprehensibilem divinæ naturæ inaccessibilemque claritatem, omnibus intellectibus sive humanis sive angelicis inaccessibiliter incognitam." Lib. iii. p. 127 ; apud Rixner, Vol. II. pp. 13 – 15.

† "Little did Leibnitz, Wolf, &c. believe, that the language of science would become a witch-jargon (Hexensprache), which we should learn like parrots." — Herder, *Metakritik*, Vol. II. p. 74.

‡ Life of Fichte, by M. Eyriès.

together, and the parent has in many cases survived the child. This form of error prevails widely among the Soofies of Persia, and the Buddhists of the remoter East, as well as in countless minor sects in that nursery of

> "all monstrous, all prodigious things,
> Abominable, inutterable, and worse
> Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
> Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire."

Two valuable works of Tholuck relate to this subject; the one being a treatise on the Pantheism of Persia,* the other an Anthology of Oriental Mystic Poems.† There is scarcely a page of these volumes which does not show something to identify the ancient and Eastern with the modern pantheism. The resemblance is declared by the learned and pious author, who has a decided leaning towards the mystical philosophy. Hegel himself cites this Anthology, with acknowledgment of the same truth, complimenting Tholuck for his genial disposition towards profound philosophy, and at the same time lamenting his still remaining prejudice and narrowness.‡ Among these Mohammedan heretics, the Soofies, we find the declaration, that God is every thing; *nihil esse prœter Deum.*§ We have also the mental gaze of intuition, the absolute *Anschauung.*‖ We have creation represented as a necessary emanation from the divinity.¶ We have the absorption of all self in God.** We have, ever and anon, the same glorification of nihility, *das Nichts;*†† and, as if no plague-spot of the pestiferous philosophy should

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* Ssufismus: sive Theosophia Persarum Pantheistica, etc. Frid. Aug. Deofidus Tholuck. Berolini, 1821.

† Blüthensammlung aus der Morgenländischen Mystik, u. s. w., von F. A. G. Tholuck. Berlin, 1825.

‡ Encyklopaedie, p. 592, note.

§ Ssufismus, p. 222.

‖ Blüthensammlung, p. 116. See also p. 198, where Tholuck says, "Here we have, in simple terms, the results of the loftiest speculations of modern times. From contrast and comparison the infinite can never be learned."

¶ Ssufismus, p. 173, *et seq.*

** Ibid., p. 64 "Dixit aliquando Bustami Deo: Quamdiu, mi Deus, inter Egoitatem et Tuitatem me manere vis? Remove Egoitatem et Tuitatem, ut Ego nihil fiam." And in the *Blüthensammlung*, Mewlana Dschelaleddin Rumi, a Persian poet, "follows (says Tholuck) the pantheistic-mystic view, that all revelations in all religions are alike true, as being different, gradual evolutions of God," &c. p. 69. So at pp. 87, 88, 89, are exhibitions of the sublimest pantheistic fatalism.

†† Blüthens., p. 66, note 1.

be wanting, we have complete Hegelianism in the doctrine that sin is no evil, nay, from one sect of transcendental Persians, that sin is even preferable to holiness.*

Every reader of the common religious news is informed, that millions of the Indian and Indo-Chinese people are pantheists. Hegel dwells on this, and quotes the *Bhagavad Gita*, in which Krishna is introduced thus speaking: "I am the breath which dwells in the body of the living; I am the beginning, and the midst of the living, and also their end. — I am, under the stars, the radiant sun, under the lunar signs, the moon," &c. &c. He denies, however, that in this there is proper pantheism, as he also denies it of his own system.† It would be difficult to deny it of the books of the Vedam. "The school of Vedantam," say the Roman Catholic missionaries in China, "has an authority superior to that of all the others. It professes, as the fundamental principle of its doctrine, the opinion of the simple unity of one existing essence, which is nothing but the *Ego*, or soul. Nothing exists except this *Ego*, in its simple unity; this essence is in some sort *trine*, by its existence, by its infinite light and supreme joy; all is here eternal, immaterial, infinite. But, because the inner experience of the *Ego* is not conformed to this beautiful idea, they admit another principle, but purely negative, [das Nichts,] and which, consequently, has no reality of being; this is the *Maya* of the *Ego*, that is, *the error*. The key for the deliverance of the soul is in these words, which these false philosophers have to repeat incessantly, with a pride beyond that of Lucifer: *I am the supreme Being*, Aham ava param Brahma."‡ We could not ask a more lucid or comprehensive view of the modern German system; for even if the missionaries invented what they say, they have, in their invention, anticipated the grandest result of Schelling and Hegel.§ And the Luciferian

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* Blüthensammlung, p. 123, note 1, p. 134, note 1, where Tholuck controverts this absurd doctrine with proper warmth.

† Hegel's Encyk., p. 586.

‡ Choix des Lettres Édifiantes, Paris, 1809, T. IV. p. 246, apud Tholuck's Ssufismus, p. 214.

§ We should, perhaps, have said before, that Kant is altogether exempt from the charge of pantheism, representing God as "not by any means a blind, acting, eternal *Nature*, the Root of all things, but a supreme Being, who, by understanding and freedom, is the author of all things." See Jacobi, *ubi supra*, p. 114.

pride, engendered in the Chinese, is precisely the temper which is manifested by those of the Indo-Germanic school, who have come to the conclusion, that God never arrives at so high a degree of self-consciousness (to use their jargon) as in their own minds. When applied to the doctrines of revealed Christianity, these dogmas produce a portentous mixture. We then learn, that the Messiah or God-man is self-developing humanity, — the race at large. On this topic many illustrations might be offered; one of these, from a popular poet of genius, we throw into the margin, as neither caring nor daring to translate it: but let him that readeth understand.*

So far as M. Cousin is concerned, we are ready to concede to him the possession of learning and genius. But his philosophy, as far as he has developed it, is to the last degree superficial and conceited. Making great pretensions to extraordinary profoundness, it does in truth but skim the surface of things, and then fly off into thin and unmeaning abstractions. The "witch-jargon" which it employs, when you have taken infinite pains to penetrate it in a given case, is often found to contain only some old truth, swathed and bandaged in this hieroglyphic dress. And one known truth, thus prepared, is then "made use of, to pass off a thousand nothings with." There is not, and, in consistency with the first principles of this philosophy, there cannot be, any attempt at ratiocination. It is a string of assumptions, and of assertions of the most unqualified and dogmatic kind. The reader cannot have failed to remark, in the extracts we have given, the peculiar kind of generalization in which M. Cousin habitually indulges. Because England is an island, therefore every thing in England stops short of its proper develope-

* "Drum bitt' ich, vor der Hand den Prediger
Auf seinem Berge ungekränkt zu lassen,
Doch dass beschwor' ich, so gewiss das Alte
Der Alten nicht mehr neulebendig wird:
Der Mann, in welchem Gott war — Gott wird leben! —
Der Mann, wer er dereinst zu euch herabsteigt,
Und zweifach, dreifach, millionenfach
Bei euch als Mensch, als alle Menschen lebt:
Er wird nicht dreifach goldne Kronen tragen,
Er wird in's Knopflock keinen Orden knüpfen,
Er wird der Herr von Bethlehem nicht heissen,
Er wird nicht weibesbaar im Kloster singen," u. s. w.

*Laienbrevier*, von Leopold Schefer. Berlin, 1835.

ment, and England can make no valuable contributions to science. Because, in religion, God is every thing and man is nothing, therefore no religious man can be a great man. Thus on all occasions he takes but a single step from the narrowest possible premises, from vague analogies, and sometimes from nothing more solid than verbal puns, to the most wide and peremptory conclusions. A hundred times in passing over his pages, we have been constrained to ask, Is this philosophy, or is it poetry? It can surely make no pretensions to the one, and it is but sorry stuff if meant for the other.

But the philosophical defects of this system do not constitute its chief point of repulsion. We have a wide charity for what seems to us nonsense, and we can even extend an amiable and silent tolerance to the pretensions of those who utter it, to be the depositories of all wisdom. But, when this nonsense begins to ape the German impiety, when it openly professes to cast off all subordination to religion, and prates in dogmatic superiority to divine revelation, we cannot but lift up our solemn protest against it. It has been made sufficiently evident, that the philosophy of M. Cousin removes the God of the Bible, and substitutes in His stead, a philosophical abstraction; that it rejects the Scriptures, and thus robs us of our dearest hopes; and that, in common with other like systems, it erects a false standard in morals, and confounds the distinction between right and wrong. We cannot, therefore, behold in silence the efforts which are making to introduce this system of abominations among us.

It has already made some progress. The "Introduction to the History of Philosophy" was translated and published in 1832, by M. Linberg. The first edition of the "Elements of Psychology" was published in 1834, and having been adopted, as the translator informs us, "as a text-book in several of our most respectable colleges and universities," a new edition is now issued, which has been expressly "prepared for the use of colleges." It might be well if the names of these most respectable colleges and universities were made known to the public. We should like to know which of our public seminaries of education has so far distinguished itself in point of science as to take, for its text-book on mental philosophy, an immethodized set of criticisms upon Locke. The work of M. Cousin does not pretend to the order and

method of a scientific treatise ; it only claims to be a criticism upon the defects and errors of the sensual philosophy. It formed a part of the author's regular course of lectures upon the History of Philosophy of the Eighteenth Century. And has it really come to this pass with any of our most respectable colleges and universities, that they are using fragments of historical treatises as text-books upon science ? Do they also learn the Newtonian Philosophy from Clarke's criticisms upon Rohault's Physics ? And is Varignon's reply to Rolle their text-book upon the Differential Calculus ?

But, for more urgent considerations than those of science, is it important that these most respectable colleges and universities should be known to the public. Most of the extracts which we have given from M. Cousin, have been taken from his " Introduction to the History of Philosophy," and yet it will be seen, that some of the worst of them have been furnished by what Dr. Henry has dignified with the title of " Elements of Psychology." And this latter work implicitly contains them all, since it teaches, in their application to criticism upon Locke, the same principles, which in other modes of their application, yield the results which we have exhibited. It should be known, therefore, what college or university dares assume the responsibility of instilling the principles of this book into the minds of the young men committed to its care. Where are these literary institutions, that are so ambitious to commence the work of flooding the land with German infidelity and pantheism ? If they are willing to undertake the work, they will doubtless, in a measure, succeed. There is something in this new philosophy which will recommend it to many, and especially to young men. It has the charm of novelty. It affects to be very profound. It puts into the mouths of its disciples a peculiar language, and imparts to them a knowledge which none others can attain. It gives them the privilege of despising all others, and makes them incommensurable with any standard of criticism but their own. If pursued and pressed by argument, they have but to rail, as their master does, at " the paltry measure of Locke's philosophy," and ridicule the bounded, insular character of all science except that in which they are adepts. It flatters the pride of the youthful heart, it takes captive the imagination, and, a still more dangerous recommendation, it tends to lighten and remove the restraints of

passion. It recognises no standard of right and wrong but the reason of man, and permits no appeal from the decisions of humanity to the authority of the one living and true God. While it retains the name of God, and does not, therefore, at once startle and shock the feelings like open atheism, it teaches its disciples to deify themselves and nature, and to look upon all phenomena alike, whether of the material universe or of the mind of man, as manifestations of the Deity. Every emotion of the heart is an acting forth of God, and every indulgence of a passion, however depraved, becomes an act of worship.* The man who exercises in any way, according to his inspired impulses, his body or his mind, even though God is not in all his thoughts, is really rendering to Him as acceptable service, as if his heart were filled with emotions of adoration and reverence. The forge of every smithy, as Thomas Carlyle has taught us, is an altar, and the smith, laboring in his vocation, is a priest offering sacrifice to God.

Such being the recommendations of this philosophy, it cannot be doubted that it will find many willing disciples, some attracted by one set of its charms, and some by another. If any of our most respectable colleges have engaged in teaching it, they will not find refractory pupils. But we warn them, that when this system shall have worked out, as work it must, its pernicious and loathsome results; when our young men shall have been taught to despise the wisdom of their elders, and renounce the reverence and submission which the human intellect owes to God; when, in the pride and vainglory of their hearts, they shall make bold question of the truths which their fathers have held most dear and sacred; when the Holy Bible shall be treated as the mere play-ground of antic and impious fancies, and an undisguised pantheism shall spread its poison through our literature; then shall they who have now stepped forth to introduce this philosophy among us, be held to a heavy responsibility. Are these idle fears? They are at least real. We believe,

* See ample evidence of this base and diabolical tendency of the doctrine of pantheism, in an article in Professor Hengstenberg's Journal for November, 1836, entitled, *Bericht über ein pantheistisches Trifolium.* For example, as we have said elsewhere, we learn, that Schefer and his compeers teach, "that *sin* is the hither aspect of that, which, *on the other side* of the heart, is entirely laudable."

doctrines do we speak. And we point the incredulous to the prediction of folly and wickedness, through which this same philosophy has led the German mind. If neither the internal evidence of the system, nor the lights of ancient and modern experience, are sufficient for conviction, we can only appeal to the verdict that time will give. In the mean while every parent and guardian in the land has an interest in knowing which of our colleges are making experiment of the effects of this philosophy upon the minds of the young men entrusted to their care.*

We have another alarming symptom of its progress among us in the Address delivered in July last, by the Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson, before the Senior Class in Divinity at Harvard University. This Address is before us. We have read it, and we want words with which to express our sense of the nonsense and impiety which pervade it. It is a rhapsody, obviously in imitation of Thomas Carlyle, and possessing as much of the vice of his mannerism as the author could borrow, but without his genius. The interest which it possesses for us arises from its containing the application of the Transcendental Philosophy in the form of instruction to young men, about to go forth as preachers of Christianity. The principles upon which Mr. Emerson proceeds, so far as he states them, are the same with those of M. Cousin. We find the same conception of the Deity as the substratum of all things, the same attributes assigned to the reason, and the same claims of inspiration for every man. But here we have a considerable more distinct avowal of the results to which these principles lead, in their application to Christianity, than M. Cousin has seen fit to give us. What we had charged

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* "How the writers of 'Young Germany' regard the religious tendencies of their country, may be gathered from the extravagant and wicked writings of Heine. After saying, in his 'Almansor,' that Pantheism was the creed-faith of the 'Tendenz and also 'some poets not willingly with what has been done to his religion,' he says, (we ask that it may be duly noted), 'Germany is at present the land of Pantheism; that is the religion of all the younger thinkers, of all the best artists, — and *Odin* is already dethroned there in theory. The God I have spoken of, — but every one knows it, — has been in the public mind of Germany. We have, in fact, outgrown Deism.' Again, 'Deism is a good religion for slaves, for children, for Germans, for unphilosophical men.' — Pantheism is the hidden religion of humanity; And this would now and forever be those German writers who, fifty years ago, let loose such a storm of fury against Spinoza.' — *Biblical Repository*, Vol. I.V. for November, 1838, pp. 7, 8, 12.





upon the system, before reading this pamphlet, as being fairly and logically involved in its premises, we have here found avowed by one of its own advocates. Thus we have said, that if the notion which it gives us of God is correct, then he who is concerned in the production of any phenomenon, who employs his agency in any manner, in kindling a fire or uttering a prayer, does thereby manifest the Deity and render to him religious worship. This consequence is frankly avowed and taught by Mr. Emerson. Speaking of the "religious sentiment," he says; "It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh, and storax, and chlorine, and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it." And again, he tells us, "Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told. Somehow he publishes it with solemn joy. Sometimes with pencil on canvass, sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite his soul's worship is builded." He even admonishes us, that the time is coming when men shall be taught to believe in "the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart." To show that this tree of knowledge resembles that in Eden in one respect, that it has a tempter beside it, we have but to quote at random from Mr. Emerson's Address. "Man is the wonder-worker. He is seen amid miracles. The stationariness of religion; the assumption, that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man, indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that he speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity, — a faith like Christ's in the *infinitude of man*, — is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed." He complains grievously of this want of faith in the infinitude of the soul; he cries out because "man is ashamed of himself, and skulks and sneaks through the world;" and utters the pathetic plaint, "In how many churches, and by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite soul; that the earth and the heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking for ever the soul of God?" Miracles, in the proper sense of the word, are of course discarded. "The very word Miracle," he tells us, "as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression. It is Monster; it is not one with the blow-

ing clover and the falling rain." And when Christ spoke of miracles, it was only because he knew "that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth." Jesus Christ is made the mere symbol of a man who had full faith in the soul, who believed in the infinitude of our nature, and who thus assists in admonishing us, "that the gleams which flash across our minds, are not ours, but God's." Any man may now become Christ, for "a true conversion, a true Christ is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments." * There is not a single truth or sentiment in this whole Address that is borrowed from the Scriptures. And why should there be? Mr. Emerson, and all men, are as truly inspired as the penmen of the sacred volume. Indeed, he expressly warns the candidates for the ministry, whom he was addressing, to look only into their own souls for the truth. He has himself succeeded thus in discovering many truths, that are not to be found in the Bible; as, for instance, "that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet natural goodness like thine and mine, and that thus invites thine and mine to be, and to grow." The present mode of interpreting Christianity, even under the form of Unitarianism, he abhors as utterly repugnant to reason, and insufficient for the wants of our nature; he stigmatizes it as an historical, traditional Christianity, that has its origin in past revelations, instead of placing its faith in new ones; and "like the zodiac of Denderah, and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, it is wholly insulated from any thing now extant in the life and business of the people." He treats Christianity as a Mythos, like the creeds of Pagan Greece and Rome, and does not even pay it sufficient respect, under this aspect, to be at the trouble of interpreting for us more than a few of the hidden meanings, that lie concealed under its allegorical forms.† We have at least to thank him, on be-

* "Our world," says Lichtenberg, a witty German philosopher, "will yet grow so refined, that it will be just as ridiculous to believe in a God, as now-a-days in *ghosts*. And then, after a while, the world will grow more refined still. And so it will go on, with great rapidity, to the utmost summit of refinement. Having attained the pinnacle, the judgment of the wise will be reversed; knowledge will change itself for the last time. Then, — and this will be the end, — then shall we believe in *nothing but ghosts*. We shall ourselves be like God. We shall know, that essence or existence is, and can be, nothing but — a phantom." — *Vermischte Schriften*, B. 1. S. 166.

† It is within the compass of the transcendental philosophy to accommo-

half of those whose eyes might not otherwise have been opened, for giving us so distinct and ample an illustration of the kind of service which M. Cousin professes himself willing to render to Christianity by means of his philosophy. We would call public attention to this Address, as the first fruits of transcendentalism in our country. We hold it up as a warning evidence of the nature of the tree which has produced it.

We know not with what degree of favor Mr. Emerson's rhapsody was received by those to whom it was addressed; but we are pleased to learn, that it was offensive to the authorities of the University. Professor Ware has since delivered and published a sermon, containing an earnest and strong defence of the personality of the Deity.* In obvious allusion to Mr. Emerson, he thus expresses his opinion; "Strange as it may seem to Christian ears, that have been accustomed to far other expressions of the Divinity, there have been those who maintain this idea; who hold, that the principles which govern the universe are the Deity; that power, wisdom, veracity, justice, benevolence, are God; that gravitation, light, electricity, are God." We noticed too, some months since, in one of our public papers, a severe rebuke of Mr. Emerson, which was attributed to another of the Professors of the University. † This, then, cannot be one of "the most respectable colleges and universities," which have adopted the "Elements of Psychology" as their text-book on mental science. ‡

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date itself to any form of religion, and appropriate its language. Schelling himself, and some of his disciples, who had been educated in the Protestant faith, embraced, it is said, the Romish religion, and formed within its pale, a sort of inner church, whose symbol and watchword was the name of the Virgin Mary. We have shown it among the Ophites, the Soofies, and the Chinese. Mr. Bancroft has with distinctness laid it open in the scheme of early Quakers, (History, Vol. II. chap. 16.) and it is now proffered to us by a clergyman of a church, to say the least, as little tinctured with this sort of poison as any in Christendom.

* The Personality of the Deity. A Sermon, preached in the Chapel of Harvard University, September 23d, 1838. By Henry Ware, Jr., Professor of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care. Published at the Request of the Members of the Divinity School. Boston. 1838.

† A paragraph has fallen under our eye, while writing this, which informs us, that this same Mr. Emerson has received so much encouragement, for what are softly called "his daring and imaginative speculations," from the people of Boston, that he is now engaged in the delivery of a Course of public Lectures upon them. [It may be worth while to observe, that the article which is probably referred to, was not written, as supposed, by a Professor of the University. — Ed.]

‡ Since the body of this article was completely written, we have received

It is suited to excite a feeling of surprise, not unmingled with sorrow, that a system of philosophy, which, in its immediate and natural results is indignantly repudiated by Unitarians, should be urged upon us, with high praise of its merits, by an accredited minister, and a Doctor in Divinity, of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We are willing to believe, that he knows not what he is doing; that, fascinated by the first charms of the new philosophy, or perchance dazzled by the brilliancy of a correspondence with a Peer of France and the great founder of Electicism, he is not able to see the end from the beginning. But this excuse, the only one that we can make for him, increases our apprehension. M. Cousin informs him, in a letter which has been given, in several different forms, to the public, that he "shall watch, with the liveliest interest, the progress of philosophy in America," and that in one of the works which he intends yet to publish, "he will endeavour to be useful to America." In the mean time, he says to Dr. Henry, "It is with great pleasure, that I see you resolved to establish yourself in the State of New York, where public instruction is so far advanced, but where philosophy is yet so very languishing; it will be *your duty* to re-animate it, to give it a strong impulse." Dr. Henry has taken care to inform the public, that he has been honored with this commission from the great head of the sect; it has been published and re-published until the whole nation have learned, that he has been consecrated, by no less a personage than M. Cousin, to the duty of re-animating our philosophy. Can he now abandon this work, and leave the duty assigned him to be performed by any meaner hand? We fear not. We fear, that, if any misgivings should cross his mind, they will give place to assurance with the arrival of the next packet, that shall bring a letter and a presentation copy of some new work from M. Cousin, or even at the very thought of such an arrival.

If our augury should prove right, we too will watch his labors. We read the "Introduction to the History of Philosophy," and the "Elements of Psychology," upon their first appearance; but we kept silence, because we did not wish in any degree to draw public attention to them until evidence

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the "Christian Review," of Boston, in which there is a notice of the system of Cousin. We are encouraged by these signs of healthful resistance, and corroborated in our judgment, by finding that the author of this sound and conclusive review, who has evidently seen the monster in its native German forests, recognises its tracks in the attempts of M. Cousin.

was afforded that they were read. We now have this evidence, and have felt it our duty to be no longer silent.

We gladly desist from the attempt to trace the pedigree, or indicate the family traits, of these various systems. Be they Indian, Teutonic, or French, we regard them alike with fear, as if some demon were bent on playing fantastic tricks with poor, proud, purblind man. We pretend not, as we have said, to comprehend these dogmas. We know not what they are ; but we know what they are *not*. They are not the truth of God ; nay, they gainsay that truth at every step. They are, if any thing can be, " profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science *falsely so called*." * So far as received, they rob us of our most cherished hopes, and take away our God. No one, who has ever heard such avowals, can forget the touching manner in which pious as well as celebrated German scholars have sometimes lamented their still lingering doubts as to the personality of God. But while these systems rob us of our religious faith, they despoil us of our reason. Let those who will, rehearse to us the empty babble about reason as a faculty of immediate insight of the infinite ; we will trust no faculty, which, like Eastern princes, mounts the throne over the corpses of its brethren. We cannot sacrifice our understanding. If we are addressed by appeals to consciousness, to intuition, we will try those appeals. If we are addressed by reasoning, we will endeavour to go along with that reasoning. But in what is thus offered, there is no ratiocination ; † there is endless assertion, not merely of unproved, but of unreasonable, of contradictory, of absurd propositions. And if any, overcome by the *prestige* of the new philosophy, as transatlantic, or as new, are ready to repeat dogmas which neither they, nor the inventers of them, can comprehend, and which approach the dialect of Bedlam, we crave to be exempt from the number, and will contentedly abstain for life from " the high *priori* road." ‡ The more we have looked at it, the more we have

* The original is pregnant; τὰς βεβήλους κενοφωνίας καὶ ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως.

† Bretschneider, though a German, seems to have felt this. " It would be unreasonable," says he of Schelling, " to demand a *proof* of such a system. For as *to prove* means but this, — to deduce something true, from something else previously known as true, there can here be no such thing as proof from higher principles, since we seek the *first truth* from which all others are deduced." — Bretsch. Grundansicht, p. 7.

‡ Even the " Critique " of Kant, which was rational and commonplace

been convinced of its emptiness and fatuity. It proves nothing; it determines nothing; or, where it seems to have results, they are hideous and godless. Moreover, we think we speak the sentiment of a large body of scholars in our country, when we say, that, if we must have a transatlantic philosophy, we desire to have it in its native robustness and freshness. We do not wish to have it through the medium of French declaimers, or of the French language, than which no tongue is less fit to convey the endless distinctions of the German. We wish to have it before it has undergone two or three transmutations; not from subalterns but from masters.* We do not wish to have a philosophy already effete, long since refuted, and heartily denounced by the best men in the country of its origin; and above all we do not wish to have a philosophy which shall conduct our young scholars into the high road to Atheism. We learn with pain, that, among the Unitarians of Boston and its vicinity, there are those who affect to embrace the pantheistic creed. The time may not be far off, when some new Emerson shall preach pantheism under the banner of a self-styled Calvinism; or when, with formularies as sound as those of Germany, some author among ourselves may, like Dinter, address his reader thus, *O thou Son of God!* † For the tendency of German philosophizing is towards impious temerity. We have long deplored the spread of Socinianism, but there is no form of Socinianism, or of rational Deism, which is not immeasurably to be preferred to the German insanity. In fine, we cleave with more tenacity than ever to the mode of philosophizing which has for several generations prevailed among our British ancestors; and especially to that Oracle in which we read, what the investigation of this subject has impressed on us with double force, that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent; that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and that, when men change the truth of God into a lie, he will give them over to a reprobate mind.

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when set by the side of our recent philosophy, was by Herder regarded as so extravagant, that, in his answer to it, he cites from Swift's "Tale of a Tub," the ninth section, being "A Digression concerning the Original, the Use, and Improvement of *Madness* in a Commonwealth." Herder, Vol. II. p. 223, ff.

* "1 *Witch.* Say, if thou 'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'.
*Macbeth.* Call *them*, let me see them."

† Evangelische K. Zeitung, 1836, p. 569.

# THE SCHOOL OF HEGEL.

[FROM THE "PRINCETON REVIEW" FOR JANUARY, 1840.]

By Charles Hodge.

WE have so recently exhibited, at considerable length, the nature of the prevalent system of German theology and philosophy,* that we may well be excused from entering again at large upon the subject. As, however, it is a subject of constantly increasing interest, it may not be amiss to give a few additional proofs of the true character of the latest form of infidelity. In doing this, we shall avail ourselves of the authority of such men as Leo, Hengstenberg, and Tholuck, men of the highest rank, in their own country, for talents, learning, and integrity. We shall let them describe this new form of philosophy, which is turning the heads of our American scholars, inflating some and dementing others; and we shall leave it to our transcendental countrymen, if they see cause, to accuse these German scholars and Christians of ignorance and misrepresentation.

It is well known to all, who have paid the least attention to the subject, that the prevalent system of philosophy in German is that of Hegel; and that this system has, to a remarkable degree, diffused itself among all classes of educated men. It is not confined to recluse professors or speculative theologians, but finds its warmest advocates among statesmen and men of the world. It has its poets, its popular as well as its scientific journals. It is, in short, the form in which the German mind now exists and exhibits itself to surrounding nations, just as much as Deism or Atheism was character-

* Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review, January, 1839.

istic of France during the Reign of Terror. That a system thus widely diffused should present different phases might be naturally anticipated. But it is still one system, called by one name, and, despite of occasional recriminations among its advocates, recognised by themselves as one whole. The general characteristic of this school is pantheism. This, as has been said, is "the public secret of Germany"; and "we must," says Hengstenberg, "designedly close our own eyes on all that occurs around us, if we would deny the truth of this assertion."* And on the following page he says, that, though there are a few of the followers of Hegel, who endeavour to reconcile his principles with Christianity, yet they are spoken of with contempt by their associates, who, as a body, are "with the clearest consciousness, and as consequently as possible, devoted to pantheism." They are, moreover, he adds, hailed as brothers by the advocates of popular pantheism, who denounce, under the name of "pietism," at once Christianity, Judaism, and Deism. This was written four years ago, a long period in the history of modern philosophy, and, since that time, the character of the school has developed itself with constantly increasing clearness.

In allusion to the French Chamber of Deputies, this school is divided into two parts, the right and the left. The former teach the principles of the philosophy in an abstruse form, as a philosophy; the other gives them a more popular and intelligible form. This latter division again, is divided into the centre, left, and extreme left. The one preserving some decorum and regard to public morals in their statements; and the other recklessly carrying out their principles to the extreme of licentiousness. To the extreme left belong the class which is designated the "Young Germany," of which Heine is one of the most prominent leaders. This class profess themselves the true disciples of the extreme right; the extreme right acknowledge their fellowship with the centre left, and the centre left with the extreme left. The respectable portion of the party, of course, express themselves with disapprobation of the coarseness of some of their associates, but they speak of them only as the unworthy advocates of the truth. Thus, says Hengstenberg, "Professor Vischer, one of the most gifted of the party, expresses himself with

* Kirchen-Zeitung, January, 1836, p. 19.

an energy against the 'Young Germans,' which shows that his better feelings are not yet obliterated, and yet acknowledges their principles with a decision and plainness, which prove how deep those principles enter into the very essence of the system, so that the better portion of the party cannot, with any consistency, reject them. In the Halle Jahrbuch, p. 1118, he speaks of the Rehabilitationists * as the 'unworthy prophets of what, in its properly understood principle, is perfectly true and good.' He says, 'It is well, if, in opposition to the morality of Kant and Schiller, the rights of our sensual nature should, from time to time, be boldly asserted.' He complains, p. 507, of the pedantry of his country, where the want of chastity is placed on a level with drunkenness, gluttony, or theft, and so expresses himself, that every one sees, that he considers incontinence a virtue under certain circumstances, and conjugal fidelity a sin." † Though this dominant party, therefore, has its divisions, its outwardly decent and its openly indecent members, it is one school, and is liable to the general charges which have been brought against it as a whole.

It may well be supposed, that a system so repugnant to every principle of true religion and sound morals, could not be openly advocated, without exciting the most decided opposition. This opposition has come from various quarters; from professed philosophers and theologians, and from popular writers, who have attacked the system in a manner adapted to the common mind. Professor Leo, of Halle, has adopted this latter method of assault. He is one of the most distinguished historians of Germany, and, until within a few years, himself belonged to the general class of Rationalists. His "History of the Jews" was written in accordance with the infidel opinions which he then entertained. Having, however, become a Christian, he has publicly expressed his sorrow for having given to the history just mentioned the character which it now bears, and has, with great boldness and vigor, attacked the writings of the leading German school in theology. This step has excited a virulent controversy, and produced an excitement, particularly at Halle,

* The name assumed by those who plead for the rehabilitation of the flesh, i. e. for the restoration of the sensual part of our nature to its rights, of which Christianity has so long deprived it.

† Preface to Kirchen-Zeitung, for 1839, p. 30.

such as has not been known for many years. Hengstenberg says, that Leo has not been sustained in this conflict, by the friends of truth, as he had a right to expect. "One principal reason," he adds, "of this reserve is, no doubt, in many cases, the reckless vulgarity of many of his opponents. When they see what Leo has had to sustain, they tremble and exclaim, *Vestigia me terrent!* A decorous controversy with opponents who have something to lose, they do not dread; but they are unwilling to allow themselves to be covered with filth."* Hengstenberg, however, is not the man to desert the truth or its advocates, let what will happen. He stands like a rock, despite the violent assault of open enemies, and the coolness of timid friends, the firmest and the most efficient defender of Christianity in Germany.

Leo entitled his book against the latest form of infidelity, "Hegelingen"; that is, Hegelians of the left, in allusion to the division of the school into a right and left side. It is presumed he gave it this title because it was intended to be a popular work, designed to exhibit the principles of the school in a manner suited to the apprehensions of the ordinary class of educated people. It was, therefore, directed, not against that division of the school which wrapped up its doctrines in the impenetrable folds of philosophical language, but against that division which have spoken somewhat more intelligibly.

With regard to the charges which Leo brings against this school, Hengstenberg says, "No one at all familiar with the literature of the day, needs evidence of their truth. Instead of doubting, he may rather wonder, that an abomination, advocated for years past, should now first, as though it were something new, be thus vehemently assaulted, and that the charges should be directed against comparatively few and unimportant writers." This latter circumstance, he adds, however, is accounted for, as Leo professed to confine himself to the productions of the year preceding the publication of his own book.

1. Leo's first charge is this: "This party denies the existence of a personal God. They understand by God, an unconscious power, which pervades all persons, and which arrives to self-consciousness only in the personality of men.

* Kirchen-Zeitung, p. 21.

That is, this party teaches atheism without reserve." With regard to this charge, Hengstenberg remarks: "Whoever has read Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' and Vatke's 'Biblical Theology,' where pantheism, which every Christian must regard as only one form of atheism, is clearly avowed, cannot ask whether the party in general hold these doctrines, but simply whether the particular persons, mentioned by Leo, belong, as to this point, to the party. About this, who can doubt, when he hears Professor Michelet say, beside many other things of like import, 'God is the eternal movement of the universal principle, constantly manifesting itself in individual existences, and which has no true objective existence but in these individuals, which pass away again into the infinite;'* [in other words, God is but the name given to the ceaseless flow of being;] when he hears him denouncing, as unworthy of the name, 'the theistical Hegelians, who believe in a personal God in another world?'"—p. 22. "Professor Vischer," adds Hengstenberg, "is so far from being ashamed of pantheism, that he glories in his shame, and represents it as the greatest honor of his friend Strauss, that he has 'logically carried out the principle of the immanence of God in the world.' That the Professors Gans and Benary agree with him and with Strauss, not only in general, but in this particular point, Michelet, 'certain of their assent,' has openly declared. According to Dr. Kühne, Hegel's God 'is not Jehovah'; he is 'the ever-streaming immanence of spirit in matter.' To this representation, Dr. Meyen agrees, and says, 'I make no secret, that I belong to the extreme left of Hegel's school. I agree with Strauss perfectly, and consider him (seine Tendenz) as in perfect harmony with

* "How strange," says Hengstenberg, "that this gross doctrine should be proclaimed to be the loftiest station of the human soul; the noblest product Christianity has ever borne." The same doctrine has been for centuries familiar to the degraded Chinese; and among them would these philosophers be much more in their place, than in a Christian country. The reader need only look at the "Apologie des Dominicains, Missionaires de la Chine," p. 12. "Les Lettrez ou Sçavans de la Chine disent que la Divinité est un principe très-pur, très-parfait, qui n'a ni commencement, ni fin; que c'est la source de toutes choses, l'essence de chaque estre, et ce qui en fait la véritable différence. Mais quelques pompeus que soient ces expressions, elles ne prouvent pas que le secte des Lettrez reconnoisse et adore le vrai Dieu. Ils n'entendent par ces beaux termes, qu'une ame insensible du monde, qu'ils croient répandue dans la matière, où elle produit tous les changemens, et on ne voit dans leur ouvrages, qu'un athéisme rafiné, et un eloignement de tout culte religieux."

Hegel.' Another writer, the anonymous author of the book 'Leo vor Gericht,' ridicules the charge of atheism as though it were a trifle. He represents the public as saying to the charge, 'What does it mean? Mr. Professor Leo is beyond our comprehension; Wodan, heathenism, Hegel's God, atheism! ha! ha! ha!'"

That Tholuck looks on the doctrine of Strauss, with whom these other writers profess agreement, and who is an avowed disciple of Hegel, in the same light, is clear from his language in his "Anzeiger," for May, 1836; "Strauss," he says, "is a man who knows no other God than him who, in the human race, is constantly becoming man. He knows no Christ but the Jewish Rabbi, who made his confession of sin to John the Baptist; and no heaven but that which speculative philosophy reveals for our enjoyment on the little planet we now inhabit."

Nothing, however, can be plainer than Strauss's own language: "As man, considered as a mere finite spirit, and restricted to himself, has no reality; so God, considered as an infinite spirit, restricting himself to his infinity, has no reality. The infinite spirit has reality only so far as he unites himself to finite spirits, (or manifests himself in them,) and the finite spirit has reality only so far as he sinks himself in the infinite."* How does this differ, except in the jargon of terms, from *le peuple-dieu*, of Anacharsis Clootz, the worthy forerunner of these modern atheists?†

"If," says another writer in Hengstenberg's Journal, "mankind is the incarnate Godhead, and, beside this incarnate divine spirit, there is no God, then we have a most perfect atheism, which removes us from Christianity far beyond the limits of Mohammedanism, the heathenism of the Indians and Chinese, or of our pagan ancestors." "Hegel and his school maintain, that God is not an individual person, as opposed to other individuals, since individuality is of necessity exclusive, limited, and finite. Since God is a trinity, wherein the outwardness of number is merged in substantial unity, so God is a universal person; because the comprehension of

* Leben Jesu, p. 730.

† "Je prêchai hautement," said Clootz, in the French Convention, "qu'il n'y a pas d'autre Dieu que la nature, d'autre souverain que le genre humain, le peuple-dieu." — Thiers, *Histoire de la Révolution Fran.*, Vol. V. p. 197.

individuals in unity is universality. This is what is meant by the expression, 'God is personality itself.' The simple question, whether they believe in the God whom Christians are bound to honor and love," continues this writer, "is here complicated with an obscure definition of the trinity, which no man can think removes the mystery of the subject, by saying, 'Die Äusserlichkeit der Zahl zu einer substantiellen Einheit umgebogen ist (The outwardness of number is merged in substantial unity).' The charge of denying the true God remains in full force, this justification of themselves to the contrary notwithstanding." And on the following page, he adds, "This school, to be honest, when asked, 'Do you deny God and Christianity?' ought to answer, 'Certainly, what you Christians of the old school call God and Christianity. We would teach you a better doctrine.'"*

We have seen how that portion of this dominant school, which retain some respect for themselves, and for the opinion of others, veil their God-denying doctrines in philosophical formulas, unintelligible to the common people, and mysterious and mystical to themselves. Stripped of its verbiage, the doctrine is, that men are God; there is no other God than the ever-flowing race of man; or that the universal principle arrives to self-consciousness only in the human race, and, therefore, the highest state of God is man. The extreme left of the school trouble themselves but little with words without meaning. They speak out boldly, so that all the world may understand. "We are free," says Heine, "and need no thundering tyrant. We are of age, and need no fatherly care. We are not the hand-work of any great mechanic. Theism is a religion for slaves, for children, for Genevese, for watch-makers."

2. "Leo," says Hengstenberg, "charges this party with denying the incarnation of God in Christ, and with turning the Gospel into a mythology. If the previous charge is substantiated, this requires no special proof. If the existence of God, in the Christian sense of the terms, be denied, we must cease to speak of an incarnation in the Christian sense of the word. The doctrine of the immanence of God in the world, says Professor Vischer, (Halle Jahrbuch, p. 1102,) forbids us to honor 'God in the letter, or in single events, or indi-

* Kirchen-Zeitung, February, 1839.

viduals.' It regards, 'as a breach in the concatenation of the universe, that an individual should be the Absolute.' According to this view, there is no other incarnation than that which Professor Michelet, in harmony with the Chinese philosophers, teaches, that 'God must constantly appear here on earth in a form which affects our senses, (als sinnlicher,) though constantly changing that form, (als ein sich aufgehebender und aufgehobener;) and in this statement, if I mistake not, the whole school will recognise the eternal incarnation of God.' The Absolute attains consciousness in a series of individuals, no one of which fully represents him, but each has significance only as a member of the whole. This incarnation of God is eternal, but all individuals are perishing and transitory; the Absolute constantly fashions for itself new individuals, and rejects the former as soon as they have answered their end. These form 'the Golgotha of the Absolute Spirit'; they surround, like bloodless ghosts, the throne of the monster that devours his own children; that, void of love, strides through ages, trampling and destroying all that lies in his way." Such is the awful language in which Hengstenberg describes the God of the Hegelians.

The incarnation of God, then, according to this school, did not occur in Christ, but is constantly occurring in the endless succession of the human race. Mankind is the Christ of the new system, and all the Gospel teaches of the Son of God is true only as it is understood of mankind. Strauss teaches this doctrine with a clearness very unusual in a philosopher. "The key," says he, "of the whole doctrine of Christ is, that the predicates which the church have affirmed of Christ, as an individual, belong to an Idea, to a real, not to a Kantian, unreal idea. In an individual, in one God-man, the attributes and functions which the church attribute to Christ are incompatible and contradictory; in the idea of the race, they all unite. Mankind is the union of the two natures, the incarnate God, the infinite revealed in the finite, and the finite conscious of its infinity. The race is the child of the visible mother and of the invisible Father, of the Spirit and of nature; it is the true worker of miracles, in so far as, in the course of its history, it constantly attains more complete mastery over nature, which sinks into the powerless material of human activity. It is sinless, so far as the course of its developement is blameless; impurity cleaves only to

the individual; but in the race, and its history, it is removed. The race dies, rises again, and ascends to heaven, in so far as by the negation of its natural element (Natürlichkeit) a higher spiritual life is produced, and as by the negation of its finitude as a personal, national, worldly spirit, its unity with the infinite spirit of heaven is manifested. By faith in this Christ, is man justified before God; that is, by the awakening the idea of the nature of man in him, especially as the negation of the natural element, which is itself a negation of the spirit, and thus a negation of a negation, is the only way to true spiritual life for man, the individual becomes a partaker of the theanthropical life of the race. This alone is the real import of the doctrine of Christ; that it appears connected with the person and history of an individual, has only the subjective ground, that his personality and fate were the occasion of awakening this general truth in the consciousness of men, and that at that period the culture of the world, and indeed the culture of the mass at all periods, allowed of their contemplating the Idea of the race, only in the concrete form of an individual."*

Tholuck, whose charity for philosophical aberrations is very wide, remarks on this passage, "As the incarnation of God occurred not in an individual, but comes to pass only in the constant progress of the race, so the individual, as a mere item of the race, has fulfilled his destiny at the close of his earthly course, and the race alone is immortal. It is not *we* that enter a future world, the future world goes forward in this, the more the spirit becomes aware of its infinitude, and, by the power of reason, gains the mastery over nature. This ideal perfection is to be attained, not in heaven, but in the perfection of our political and social relations. This system, therefore, comes to the same result with the materialism of the Encyclopedists, who mourned over mankind for having sacrificed the real pleasures of time for the visionary pleasures of eternity, and the protracted enjoyments of life for the momentary happiness of a peaceful death. It agrees, moreover, despite of its intellectual pretensions, with the wishes of the materialistical spirit of the age, which sets as the highest end of man, not the blessings promised by the church,

* Strauss's Leben Jesu, Th. II. S. 734, quoted by Tholuck, in his Glaubwürdigkeit, &c. p. 19.

but, according to the 'Young Germans,' the refined pleasures of life, and, according to politicians, the perfection of the state."

It is strange, that men holding such views should trouble themselves at all with the Gospel. As this system, however, has arisen in a Christian country, there was but one of two things to do, either to say, that real Christianity means just what this system teaches, or to explode the whole evangelical history. Some have taken the one course, and some the other, while some unite both. That is, they reject the Gospel history as a history; they represent it as a mere mythology; but, as the ancient philosophers made the mythology of the Greeks and Romans a series of allegories containing important truths, so do these modern philosophers represent the Gospels as a mere collection of fables, destitute in almost every case of any foundation in fact, but still expressive of the hidden mysteries of their system. It is by a mytho-symbolical interpretation of this history, that the truth must be sought. The "Life of Jesus," by Strauss, is a laborious compilation of all the critical objections against the New Testament history, which he first thus endeavoured to overturn, and then to account for and explain as a Christian mythology. "Had this book," says Hengstenberg, "been published in England, it would have been forgotten in a couple of months."* In Germany it has produced a sensation almost without a parallel. It has become the rallying-ground of all the enemies of Christianity, open and secret, and the number of its advocates and secret abettors is therefore exceedingly great. The author, says Tholuck, "has uttered the sentence which so few dared to utter; 'The evangelical history is a fable.' He has uttered it at a time when the deniers of the truth were filled with spleen at the prospect of a constantly increasing faith in the Gospel. With what joy, then, must this hypocritical and timid generation hail a leader, who gives himself to the sweat and dust of the battle, while they hide behind the bushes, and rub their hands, and smile in each other's faces."†

3. Leo's third charge against this party is, that they deny the immortality of the soul. "This point also needs no further proof," says Hengstenberg, "since the former have

* Kirchen-Zeitung, Jan. 1, 1836, p. 35.
† Glaubwürdigkeit, p. 34.

been proved. With the personality of God falls of course that of man, which is the necessary condition of an existence hereafter. To a pantheist, 'the subject which would assert its individual personality, is evil itself' (Michelet). It is regarded as godless, even to cherish the desire of immortality. According to the doctrine of the eternal incarnation of God, it must appear an intolerable assumption, for an individual to lay claim to that which belongs only to the race ; he must freely and gladly cast himself beneath the wheels of the idol car, that he may make room for other incarnations of the Spirit, better adapted to the advancing age. The proofs, however, of this particular charge are peculiarly abundant. Hegel himself, who ought not to be represented as so different from the Hegelingen, since the difference between them is merely formal and not essential, involved himself in the logical denial of the immortality of the soul. This has been fully proved with regard to him and Dr. Marheineke, in a previous article in this journal (that is, the Kirchen-Zeitung). It has also been demonstrated by Weise in the work, 'Die philosophische Geheimlehre von der Unsterblichkeit,' as far as Hegel is concerned ; and with Weise, Becker has more recently signified his agreement. If this happens in the green tree, what will become of the dry ?

"Richter came out with such a violent polemic against the doctrine of immortality, that the party had to disavow him, for fear of the public indignation. When, however, they thought it could be done unnoticed or without danger, they acknowledged the same doctrine. Michelet endeavours most earnestly to free Hegel's system from the charge of countenancing the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as from a reproach. He speaks out clear and plain his own views, in words which, according to him, Hegel himself had spoken ; 'Thought alone is eternal, and not the body and what is connected with its individuality,' that is, the whole personality which, according to this system, depends entirely on the body (Leiblichkeit). . . . . Ruge (Halle Jahrbuch, p. 1011) ridicules the scruples of theologians, as to whether 'Philosophy can make out the immortality of the human soul; whether philosophy has any ethics; whether it can justify the gross doctrines of hell, of wailing and gnashing the teeth, &c.' 'Such vulgar craving,' he says, 'is beginning to mix itself with purely philosophical and spiritual concerns, and threat-

ens to merge philosophy in its troubled element. The more this dogmatical confusion arrogates to itself; the more this senseless justification of the wretched errors of orthodoxy dishonors the free science of philosophy, the more necessary will it be to cast out this dungheap of nonsense to the common mind (in das gemeine Bewusstseyn).' Meyen at first puts on the air as though he would acknowledge the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. 'The Hegelians,' he says, 'do indeed reject the sensual conceptions of immortality, but they admit the doctrine as presented by Marheineke in his Theology.' The dishonest ambiguity of this sentence will not escape notice. Dr. Marheineke denies the continued personal existence of the soul after death, and attributes the belief of such a doctrine to selfishness. 'Whoever,' continues Meyen, 'is so conversant, as Hegel, with what is eternal in connexion with spirit, must admit the eternity of the spirit.' Here again is intentional ambiguity. The question concerning the continued personal existence of the soul is silently changed for the question about the eternity of spirit. A veil is thrown over the fact that Hegel, while he admitted the latter, denied the former, as Michelet and others have sufficiently shown. These preliminary remarks, transparent as they are, were only intended to prevent his being quoted in proof of the disbelief of immortality, in the school to which he belongs. He immediately comes out plainly with his own views and those of his party, yet so as still to leave a door open behind him. 'What though a Hegelian,' says he, 'did not believe in the immortality of the soul in a Christian sense, — [let it be noticed, that the words are here so placed, that the uninformed should infer that the school, as a whole, and its abovementioned leaders, do believe in immortality, in a Christian sense,] — what then? If I resign myself to this, am I thereby a different person, or is the world for me different? I would seek to acknowledge God in his works as before, and I would live as morally as ever.' At last, however, it becomes too hot for him, even in these thin clothes, and he casts them off, having assumed them only for the sake of his brothers in Hegel, who happen to be in office. 'Grass,' says he, 'is already growing on the grave of Daub; is he therefore dead for his friends and for the world? his works, and hence also his spirit, live. Many winter storms have already swept over the graves of Hegel

and of Goethe, but does not their spirit still live among us? It is, as Christ said, Where two of you are met together, there am I in the midst of you.* Thus each continues to live according to his works. The citizen in the remembrance of his family; he who has distinguished himself in the kingdom of the spirit, still lives in that kingdom, and hence, he who has worked for eternity is immortal.'"

4. "Leo finally," says Hengstenberg, "accuses this school of wishing to pass themselves for Christians, by means of disguising their ungodly and abominable doctrines under a repulsive and unintelligible phraseology. This is a heavy charge. Honesty and candor have ever been the ornament of our national character. They have ever been regarded as the innate virtues of a German. Whoever undermines them is a disgrace to his country. Yet who can say the charge is not well founded? Several proofs of its truth have been given in what has already been said. A statement, however, by Professor Vischer, in his character of Dr. Strauss (Halle Jahrbuch, p. 111), is worthy of special attention. 'How firm

* To this passage Hengstenberg has the following note. "We frequently meet, in the writings of this school, with similar shameful profanations of the Scriptures, which are seldom quoted without some mutilation, which is characteristic of the relation of the party to the word of God. These writers delight to transfer to Hegel what the Scriptures say of Christ. According to Bayrhoffer (Halle Jahrb. p. 343), Hegel 'is the absolute centre, around which the present revolves.' His first disciples are compared with the apostles. 'Hinrichs is the rock of terminology, the strength and the support of the school.' (Jahrb. p. 672). Leo, who has left the party, is compared with Judas, and even designated as 'the fallen angel of speculation,' (Hegel's doctrine concerning the State.) The school, as a whole, is a copy of the church of Christ. According to Bayrhoffer, (Hegelinge, p. 29.) it should no longer be called a school, but 'the congregation of the idea,' or 'the spiritual kingdom of the idea.' Ruge applies the passage, 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force,' to the popular exhibition of Hegel's philosophy by Erdmann. The most shameful of these perversions, however, relate to the passages concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost. Whoever comes out boldly against the spirit of Hegel, or of his disciples, or of the time, or of hell, is declared guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit, or rather the Spirit, (for the word *holy* they commonly leave out, it savours too much of morality; when it is inserted, it is only for the sake of the allusion). 'The writings,' says Meyen, 'in which Leo has presented his new opinions, blaspheme the Spirit, — and hence God himself.' To which we answer: Yes, your spirit and your God we wish to blaspheme, for blasphemy of him is the praise of the God of heaven and of his Spirit. . . . . " We can hardly express the admiration which we feel for Hengstenberg. No one who does not know how much alone and aloft he stands, and how much he has had to endure for his uncompromising opposition to the enemies of God and religion, can appreciate the noble firmness and vigor of his character.

his (Strauss's) conviction as to the main point even then was, is shown in a highly interesting correspondence between him and one of his friends, communicated to me through the kindness of the latter, and which now lies before me. It is touching to observe with what cheerful confidence in the saving power of the truth, he endeavours to remove the anxiety and scruples of his friend, who felt pained by the chasm which his scientific convictions had made between him and his congregation; how clearly he shows, that it is no dishonesty to speak the language of the imagination (der Vorstellung), to introduce, unobserved, into the figures which alone float before the believer, the thoughts of the knower (des Wissenden).' Here the zeal and skill with which Dr. Strauss teaches his friend how to lie, and instructs him how to steal from the congregation what they regard as the most precious treasure (and what, for that very reason, it will be found impossible to rob them of), are represented as a great merit, and the reader is exhorted to allow himself to be affected by this proof of his amiableness, and in the warmth of his sympathy to press his hand, and exclaim, O how good you are! We, however, cannot regard such conduct without the deepest moral abhorrence. The school endeavour to justify this course, from the relation which Hegel has established between Conception and Thought (Vorstellung und Begriff*). But this justification is completely worthless. It is not one whit better than the theories by which the robbers in Spain justify their vocation. Evil is not better, but on the contrary worse, and the more to be condemned, when it is brought *in formam artis*. The relation assumed by Hegel between Conception and Thought, would allow at most of a formal accommodation. That yours is of that nature, you cannot assert. . . . . If the difference between your Thought

* This translation of the words Vorstellung and Begriff is no doubt inadequate. The technical terms of a system do not admit of adequate translation, because the sense assigned to them in the system is arbitrary. The only method that can be pursued in such cases, is to give their nearest corresponding words the same arbitrary signification. Hegel calls that form of truth which is the object of absolute knowledge, a pure thought, Begriff; and that form in which it is the object of faith or feeling, Vorstellung. Or, the exercises of feeling, desire, will, &c., considered as objects of attention, are Vorstellungen; these it is the office of philosophy, by the process of thinking, to turn into thoughts, Begriffe. And hence he says, Vorstellungen can be regarded as the metaphors of Begriffe. See his Encyklopädie, p. 5.

(Begriff) and our Conception (Vorstellung) is merely formal, why do you rave with such hatred against us? why do you say, that 'pietism is a disease which corrupts the very life of the spirit'? (Vischer, p. 526.) How can the question be about a mere formal difference? Our Conception and your Thought are just as far apart as heaven and hell. We confess God the Father, the maker of heaven and earth, and Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son; you deny both the Father and the Son, and confess Antichrist, yea, would yourselves be his members. . . . . ."

Hengstenberg afterwards remarks, that it is almost incredible to what an extent this deception and hypocrisy is carried. This course of conduct, however, though very characteristic of this modern school, is an old device. The Rationalists, to go no further back, were accustomed to speak of the Lamb of God, of the blood of Christ, &c., with the avowed purpose, that the people should attach to these expressions their scriptural sense, while they employed them in a very different one. How strange, too, it sounds, to hear this Alumnus of Cambridge, speaking of "the divine character of Christ," of "the cross of Christ as the hope of the world," and "of the anointing of the Holy Ghost." This community, we trust, is not prepared to have such solemn words made playthings of. Let philosophers and errorists, who deny the truths of the Bible, find words for themselves, and not profane the words of God by making them a vehicle for the denial of his truth. One of the most monstrous examples of this perversion of scriptural language, occurs in a passage quoted above from Strauss. He too will have it, that man is justified by faith in Christ, because, as God is incarnate in the race, the race is Christ, and by faith in the race, or by coming to a proper apprehension of his own nature, man reaches his highest state of perfection. Mr. Bancroft, in his "History," talks of men being justified by faith, meaning thereby, that they are justified by their principles. And the Oxford divines teach, that we are justified by faith, since the thirty-nine articles say so, but then it is by the faith of the church.*

* It should be here stated, that Dr. Strauss, at the close of his "Life of Jesus," as first printed, had freely admitted the incompatibility of his views with the exercise of the ministry in the Christian church. This admission, in the last edition, he has suppressed; and in his letter to the authorities of Zurich, when appointed a professor of theology in the University of that

"With this last charge, Leo," says Hengstenberg, "entered upon the department of morals; and we could wish that he had dwelt longer on this part of the subject. It would then have been shown, how this party are laboring to destroy all that Rationalism has left of religion and morality. What their ethics are, may be readily inferred from their religion. Where there is no personal God, there is no law, which men need fear to violate, as the expression of his will. If the distinction between God and man is removed, if man is set in the place of God, then nothing is more natural, than that men should without reserve, and upon principle, give themselves up to all their inclinations and lusts. To suppress these desires, is to hinder the developement of God; if they do not become God as developed, they do become the nascent God; if not good in themselves, they are relatively good, as transition-points in the progress of developement. It is not sin that is sinful, but only impenitence, that is, cleaving to the relative good, which is vulgarly called evil, as though it were the absolute good. These painful results of the doctrine of this school, are everywhere, with the most logical consequence, avowed and brought to light. Ruge, in a passage already quoted, attributes the question, whether philosophy has any ethics, to 'vulgar craving,' (gemeinen Bedürftigkeit,) as much as the question, whether it can vindicate the gross doctrine of hell, &c.; and insists, that this whole 'dungheap should be cast out into the mire of the common mind.' In connexion with Leo, and the editor [Hengstenberg himself], Menzel is designated as 'the incarnation of Protestant Jesuitism (Meyen, p. 5), because he has appeared in defence of morality, now completely antiquated, against the 'Young Germany.' On every side, efforts are made to represent him, before the whole nation, as a marked

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city, he says, he should not consider it a difficult matter to quiet the apprehensions of those, who feared that he would labor to overthrow the Christian religion; that he would endeavour to sustain "the fundamental truths of Christianity," and only try to free it "from human additions." When it is considered, that he regards as human additions almost every thing that the people of Zurich hold to be fundamental truths, there can be but one opinion of the dishonesty of this statement. The reputation for candor, which he had gained by his first admission, has been lost entirely by these subsequent proceedings. Our readers are aware, that the attempt to force Strauss on the people as a professor, led to one of the most remarkable revolutions of our times. The people rose *en masse*, and overthrew the government.

man, on account of his conflict with that which the spirit of the pit, in our day, says to the common man. 'Upon Wolfgang Menzel,' says Meyen, 'judgment is already executed; he lies like a scurvy old dog on the foul straw, which Herr von Cotta has in compassion left him, and can seldom muster courage to yelp; that all is over with his pitiful morality, which has gone to its rest.'* The principles of the 'Young Germany' have been advanced in the 'Literary Magazine' of Berlin with shameless effrontery, and the infamous advocates of those principles defended; and the sottish prudery of the 'gray heads of the age,' who were disgusted at their song, 'We lead a merry life,' has been turned into ridicule." Hengstenberg then introduces the passage from Professor Vischer, quoted on a previous page, in which, while he condemns these "Young Germans" as unworthy prophets, he defends their principles.

This pantheistic school, therefore, is as subversive of all morality, as it is of all religion. It does not admit the idea of sin. As there is no God, there is no law, and no transgression. Every thing actual, is necessary. The progress of the race, the ever-nascent God, goes on by eternal, undeviating laws, and all that occurs, in fact, is the action of the only God of which this system knows.† We do not think it right to stain our pages with the indecent ravings of those writers who, availing themselves of the principles of the decent portion of the school, have applied them to the service of sin. It is enough to show the nature of the system, that the pantheist "does not believe in the continued existence of the individual, in the reality of his freedom, in the deadly nature of sin, and its opposition to God. Individuals are to him but the phantasmagoria of the spirit. Liberty is but the subtile moment of determination. Sin is what a man, with his measure of knowledge and power, cannot avoid; remorse is, therefore, a forbidden emotion in his system."‡

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* Wolfgang Menzel was the editor of a periodical called the "Morgen-Blatt," belonging to Von Cotta, one of the principal booksellers of Germany. In that Journal, Menzel attacked, with great manliness and effect, the libertine principles of Heine, Gutzkow, and other writers of the extreme left of the pantheistic school.

† "Die Geschichte ist der werdende Gott, und dies Werden Gottes geschieht nach ewigen Gesetzen; nirgends ein Sprung, überall nur Entwickelung." — Hengstenberg, in the *Kirchen-Zeitung*, January, 1836.

‡ Kirchen-Zeitung, 1836, p. 571.

The most offensive aspect of this whole system is, that in deifying men, it deifies the worst passions of our nature. "This," says a writer in Hengstenberg's Journal, "is the true, positive blasphemy of God, — this veiled blasphemy, — this diabolism of the deceitful angel of light, — this speaking of reckless words, with which the man of sin sets himself in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The atheist cannot blaspheme with such power as this; his blasphemy is negative; he simply says, There is no God. It is only out of Pantheism that a blasphemy can proceed, so wild, of such inspired mockery, so devoutly godless, so desperate in its love of the world; a blasphemy at once so seductive, and so offensive, that it may well call for the destruction of the world." *

As an illustration at once of the confidence and character of these modern pantheists, we shall give one more passage from Strauss, the most prominent, and, perhaps, most respected writer of the school; "This disposition is not a secret of the philosophers only; as an obscure instinct, it has become the universal spirit of the age. It is acknowledged, that we no longer know how to build churches. But, on the other hand, from an impulse, which, as a miasma, has spread, especially over all Germany, monuments to great men, and lofty spirits arise on every side. There is much that is ridiculous mixed with this feeling; but it has its serious aspect, and is assuredly a sign of the times. The 'Evangelical Church Journal' (Hengstenberg's), has taken the right view of the matter, when it pronounces accursed, as a new idolatry, the honor paid to the man on the pillar in the Place Vendôme, and to him of the Weimar Olympus. In fact, they are Gods, before whom the God of the 'Church Journal' may well tremble; or, in other words, a Heathenism which endangers its Christianity. If Heine has compared the accounts of O'Meara, Antommarchi, and Las Casas, with Matthew, Mark, and Luke, will not some one soon discover, in Bettina's Letters, † a new Gospel of John? A new paganism, or, it may be, a new Catholicism, has come over Protestant Germany. Men are no longer satisfied with one incarnation of God; they desire, after the manner of the Indians, a

* Kirchen-Zeitung, 1836, p. 571.

† An enthusiastic girl, who wrote a series of letters to Goethe, filled with a sort of raving Platonic love.

series of repeated avatars. They wish to surround the solitary Jesus with a new circle of saints, only these must not be taken from the church alone ; but, as in the private chapel of the Emperor Alexander Severus, the statue of Orpheus stood beside those of Christ and of Abraham, so the tendency of the age is to honor the revelation of God in all the spirits which have wrought, with life and creative power, on mankind. The only worship, — we may deplore it, or we may praise it, deny it we cannot, — the only worship which remains for the cultivated classes of this age, from the religious declension of the last, is the worship of genius." *

Such, then, is this latest form of infidelity. It knows no intelligent or conscious God but man ; it admits no incarnation, but the eternal incarnation of the universal spirit in the human race ; the personality of men ceases with their present existence ; they are but momentary manifestations of the infinite and unending ; there is neither sin nor holiness ; neither heaven nor hell. Such are the results to which the proud philosophy of the nineteenth century has brought its followers. We have not drawn this picture. We have purposely presented it as drawn by men, with regard to whose opportunities and competency there can be no room for cavil. It might be supposed, that a system so shocking as this, which destroys all religion and all morality, could be adopted by none but the insane or the abandoned ; that it might be left as St.-Simonianism, Owenism, or Mormonism, to die of its own viciousness. This supposition, however, overlooks the real nature of the system. We have presented it in its offensive nakedness. It is not thus that it addresses itself to the uninitiated or the timid. What is more offensive than Romanism, when stripped of its disguises ? yet what more seductive in its bearing, for the vast majority of men ? There is every thing to facilitate the progress of this new philosophy. It has its side for all classes of men. For the

* " Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum. Selbst-gespräche von Dr. Strauss. In der Zeitschrift : Der Freihafen, Gallerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft. Mit Beiträgen von Carus, Gans, König, Mises, Barnhagen von Ense, dem Fürsten von Pückler, Rosenkranz, Strauss, Theodor Mundt, Kühne u. A. Drittes Heft." The names of the contributors to this Journal, may give some idea of its character. Here we have Gans, Rosenkranz, Strauss, prominent Hegelian philosophers or theologians, and the libertine Prince of Pückler.

contemplative and the sentimentally devout, it has its mysticism, its vagueness, its vastness. It allows them to call wonder, a sense of the sublime or of the beautiful, religion. For the poet, too, it has its enchantments, as it gives consciousness and life to every thing, and makes all things expressive of one infinite, endless mind. For the proud, no Circe ever mingled half so intoxicating a cup. "Ye shall be as God," said the Archtempter of our race: "Ye are God," is what he now whispers into willing ears. For the vain and frivolous, it has charms scarcely to be resisted. It gives them easy greatness. They have only to talk of the *I*, and the *not I*, (or, as they prefer to have it, the *me* and the *not me*,) and they are beyond the depth of all ordinary men. And even then they are, according to the system, far greater than they can possibly think themselves to be. For the sensual, it is a perfect heaven. It legitimates and dignifies all enjoyments. It makes self-indulgence religion. It forbids all remorse and all fear. That a system so manifold as this, which has a chamber of imagery for every imagination, should find advocates and friends on every hand, is not a matter of surprise. There is still another circumstance, which must be taken into consideration, in accounting for the rapid progress of this new philosophy, and in speculating on its prospects. It has, in some of its principles, a certain resemblance to the truth. The God of the Bible is not the God of the deist, of the rationalist, or of the worldling, a God afar off, who has no oversight or direction of his creatures. The world is not a machine, wound up and left to itself. The wonders of vegetable and animal life are not the result of the properties of matter acting blindly and without guidance. The God of the Bible is an everywhere present, and ever active God, in whom we live and move and have our being; it is his Spirit that causes the grass to grow; it is he that fashions the curious mechanism of our bodies, who numbers the hairs of our heads, and directs all our goings. All the changes in nature are produced by his power, so that every thing we see is in truth a manifestation of God. But then the Bible does not merge God in the world, or the world in God. Though everywhere present in the world, God is not the world; but a Being of infinite intelligence, power, excellence, and blessedness, guiding and controlling his creatures, whose acts and consciousness are their own

and not his. The chasm, which divides the pantheistic from the scriptural view of God, is bottomless, and the difference in the effects of the two views is infinite ; it is all the difference between infinite good and infinite evil. If there is any thing impressed clearly on the Bible, it is the personality of God ; it is the ease and confidence with which his people can say *Thou*, in calling on his name ; it is, that he ever says *I* of himself, and *you*, when addressing his creatures.

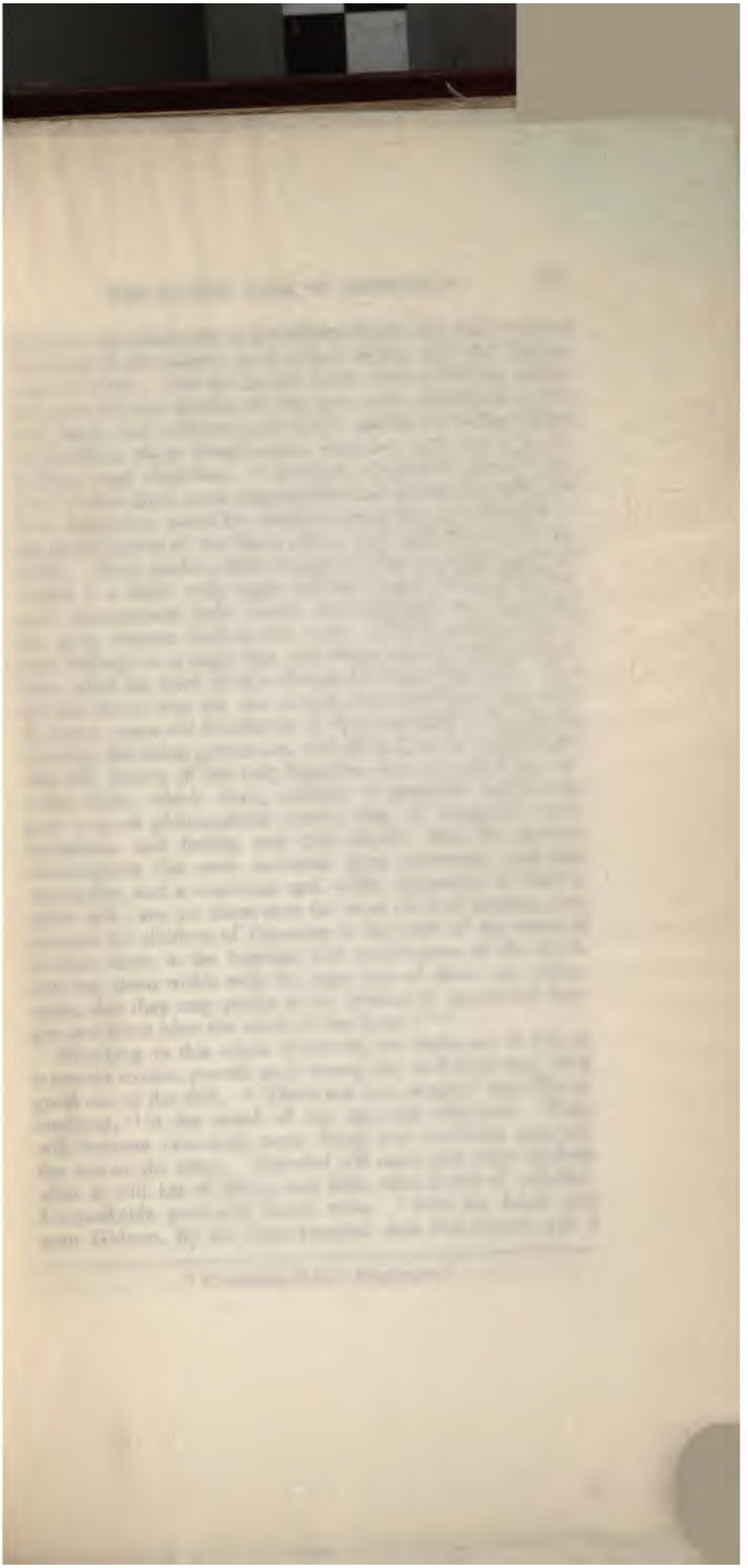
It is doubtless in a good degree owing to the deceptive show of truth in this new system, — to its pretending to bring back, if we may reverently so speak, God to the world from which deists and rationalists had so long banished him, that we are to attribute the hold which it has taken of many of the better sort of minds ; and it is to this that it owes its most alarming aspect ; since those errors are always the most dangerous, which can put on the nearest resemblance to truth. A conflict, therefore, is anticipated by the Christians of Germany with this new form of infidelity, far more lasting and deadly than any that has yet afflicted the church in that country. If rationalism, so unattractive, so lifeless, made such inroads upon the church, " What," say they, " may be expected from Pantheism, a system so full of life, of feeling, of mysticism, of poetry, whose disciples can, with a deceptive show, boast that they are religious, that they are introducing a new, beautiful, and universal religion, and give themselves out as a new sort of Christians " ; nay, who pretend at times to be real Christians ; who say they believe in the trinity, in the incarnation, redemption, resurrection, and all other doctrines of the Bible, that is, they express some philosophical enigma under these terms ; or at times speak of Christianity with affected respect, as good for the people in their present state, professing with Cousin, that " philosophy is patient, . . . . . happy in seeing the great bulk of mankind in the arms of Christianity, she offers, with modest kindness, to assist her in ascending to a yet loftier elevation." *

Strange, therefore, as it may seem, when we look at this system in its true character, it undoubtedly has already prevailed to a great extent in Germany ; and is making some progress in France, England, and our own country. Its true nature is disguised in obscure philosophical language, which

* Cousin's Introduction to Hist. of Phil., p. 57.

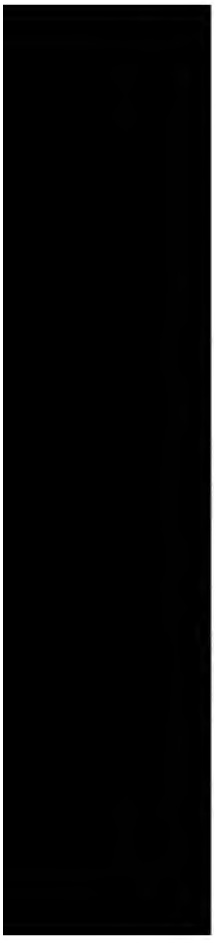
many use without understanding, until it comes at last to be the expression of their real opinions. We have evidence enough that this pantheistic philosophy has set its cloven foot in America. First, we had a set of young men, captivated by the genius and mysticism of Coleridge, republishing works through which were scattered intimations, more or less plain, of the denial of a personal God. This was the first step. In the writings of Coleridge the general tone and impression was theistical. He was an Englishman; he had received too many of his modes of thinking and of expression from the Bible, to allow of his being a pantheist except when musing. Next, we had the writings of Cousin, a man of a different cast, with none of Coleridge's solemnity or reverence; a Frenchman, on whose mind the Bible had left no strong impress; vain and presumptuous, and yet timid; intimating more than he durst utter. As he has given the world nothing in the form of a system, it is only by these occasional intimations, that his readers can judge how far he adopts the ideas of the German school, whence all his opinions are borrowed. These intimations, however, are sufficiently frequent and sufficiently clear to make it plain, that he is a denier of God and of the Gospel. This has been clearly proved in the article in this Review already referred to.* He uses almost the very language of the Hegelians in expressing his views of the nature of God. "God exists as an idea," say the Hegelians;† "these ideas," that is, of the infinite, finite, and the relation between them, "are God himself," says Cousin.‡ According to the Hegelians, God arrives to consciousness in man; and so Cousin teaches; "God returns to himself in the consciousness of man." The German school teaches, that every thing that exists is God in a certain stage of developement; so also Cousin; "God is space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end, and centre, at the summit of being and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple in a word, that is to say, at the same time God, nature, and humanity. In fact, if God is not every thing, he is nothing."‖ Surely there can be but one opinion among Christians about a system, which admits of no God but the universe, which allows no intelli-

* Princeton Review, January, 1839. [See above, p. 30 *et seq.*]
† Marheineke's Dogmatik, § 174. ‡ Elements of Psychology, p. 400.
‖ Ibid., p. 399.



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* Princeton Review, January, 1838. [See above, p. 30 et seq.]
† Marheineke's Dogmatik, § 178. ‡ Elements of Psychology, p. 400.
‖ Ibid., p. 300.



gence or consciousness to the infinite Spirit but that to which he attains in the human soul, which makes man the highest state of God. And we should think there could be, among the sane, but one opinion of the men, who, dressed in gowns and bands, and ministering at God's altars, are endeavouring to introduce these blasphemous doctrines into our schools, colleges, and churches. "Ancient chronicles relate," says Leo, "that there were watchtowers and castles for which no firm foundation could be obtained, until (by the direction of the practitioners of the black art) a child was built up in the walls. They made a little chamber in the foundation, placed within it a table with sugar and playthings, and while the poor unconscious little victim was rejoicing over its toys, the grim masons built up the wall. This is a fable; or, if true, belongs to a pagan age, and every nerve within us trembles, when we think of this abomination of heathenism. But are not those, who cut the people loose from the more than thousand years old foundation of their morality and faith, by teaching the rising generation, that there is no personal God; that the history of his only begotten Son is a cunningly devised fable, which does, indeed, if properly understood, give a good philosophical sense; that all subjective consciousness and feeling end with death; that the greatest abominations that ever occurred were necessary, and thus reasonable, and a conscious and wilful opposition to God is alone evil; are not these men the most cruel of masons, who immure the children of Germany in the walls of the tower of heathen ideas, in the bastions and watchtowers of the devil, enticing them within with the sugar toys of their vain philosophy, that they may perish in the horrors of unsatisfied hunger and thirst after the word of the Lord?" *

Shocking as this whole system is, we doubt not it will, to a certain extent, prevail even among us; and God may bring good out of the evil. "There are two people," says Hengstenberg, "in the womb of this age, and only two. They will become constantly more firmly and decidedly opposed, the one to the other. Unbelief will more and more exclude what it still has of faith; and faith, what it has of unbelief. Unspeakable good will hence arise. 'And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped, will I

* Conclusion of his "Hegelingen."

those of the New. All such must either go on or go back. Professor Norton cannot give up the first chapters of Matthew as fabulous, and call him an infidel who gives up the remainder. This new philosophy will break up the old divisions. It will carry some on to atheism, and drive others back to the unmutilated Bible.

This is not the only effect which this new leaven may be expected to produce. As in Germany it has operated to the destruction of Rationalism, so here it may serve to bring Socinianism and Taylorism into contempt. Even some Unitarian ministers of Boston, we are told, have already discovered, that "the religion of the day seemed too cold, too lifeless, too mechanical, for many of their flock."* "There are many, I doubt not," says this same authority, "who will welcome its principles, (that is, the principles "of the leading school in modern German theology,") as soon as they are understood, as the vital, profound, and ennobling theology, which they have earnestly sought for, but hitherto sought in vain."† If this is so, then farewell to Socinianism, and farewell to Taylorism. If only for consistency's sake, those who, with this Alumnus, find in the transcendentalism of Schleiermacher the true philosophy, must feel or affect the contempt which he felt for the Rationalists and Pelagians. The ground on which they stand, however, is too narrow to afford them a footing. Schleiermacher gave up almost every thing, except the incarnation of God in Christ. This was the centre of his system. Those whom he brought off from Rationalism, have almost all gone on, with the Hegelians, to Atheism, or turned back to the Bible. And so it will be here. Indeed, the man who can see no harm in pantheism, who thinks it a most religious system, and venerates its advocates, as is the case with this Alumnus, has but one step to take, and he is himself in the abyss. We should not, therefore, be surprised to see, in the providence of God, this new philosophy, which is in itself infinitely worse than Socinianism or Deism, made

* Letter to Mr. Norton, p. 12.

† Ibid., p. 149. The above passage must not be understood as referring to the principles of the school, described in the preceding pages. The Alumnus seems to think, that the little set of Schleiermacher's pupils constitute the leading school in Germany. In this, we think, he is greatly mistaken; but we do not wish to be understood to represent him as endorsing the doctrines of the Hegelians. He says he is no pantheist, though he thinks pantheism very religious.

the means of breaking up those deadening forms of error, and, while it leads many to destruction, of driving others back to the fountain of life.

Though, for the reasons stated above, we think it not unlikely, that this system will make a certain degree of progress in our country, we have no fear of its ever prevailing, either here or in England, as it does in Germany. Apart from the power of true religion, which is our only real safeguard against the most extravagant forms of error, there are two obstacles to the prevalence of these doctrines among Englishmen, or their descendants. They do not suit our national character. A sanity of intellect, an incapacity to see wonders in nonsense, is the leading trait of the English mind. The Germans can believe any thing. Animal magnetism is for them, as one of the exact sciences. What suits the Germans, therefore, does not suit us. Hence almost all those who, in England or in this country, have professed transcendentalism, like Puss in boots, have made them ridiculous. If it was not for its profaneness, what could be more ludicrous than Mr. Emerson's Address? He tells us, that religious sentiment is myrrh, and storax, and chlorine, and rosemary; that the time is coming when the law of gravitation and purity of heart will be seen to be identical, that man has an infinite soul, &c. How much, too, does Dr. Henry look, in Cousin's philosophy, like a man in clothes a *great deal* too large for him. It will not do. Such men were never made for transcendentalists. This is not meant in disparagement of those gentlemen. It is a real compliment to them, though not exactly to their wisdom. Coleridge is the only Englishman whom we know any thing about, who took the system naturally. To him it was truth; he was a mystic; he had faith in what he said, for his words were to him the symbols of his own thoughts. It is not so with others. They repeat a difficult lesson by rote, striving hard all the while not to forget.

The Germans keep their philosophy for suitable occasions. They do not bring it into mathematics or history. With us, however, it is far too fine a thing to be kept locked up. If transcendental at all, we must be so always. Marheineke, the first almost in rank of Hegel's scholars, has written a history of the German Reformation, which is a perfect masterpiece; perfectly simple, graphic, and natural. From this

history, the reader could not tell whether he was a Wolfian, Kantian, or Hegelian; he would be apt to think he was a Christian, who loved Luther and the Gospel. Compare this with Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution," which is almost as transcendental as Hegel's "Encyklopädie." Carlyle is a man of genius, yet his exotic philosophy makes him, as a writer, absurd.

It is not, however, only or chiefly on this want of adaptation of the German mysticism to the sane English mind, that we would rely to counteract the new philosophy; it is the influence of the Bible on all our modes of thinking. We believe in God the Father, the maker of heaven and earth. We must have a God who can hear prayer. In Germany, the educated classes, little in the habit of attending church, have, for generations, felt comparatively little of the power of the Bible. There was no settled idea of a personal God, such as is visible in every page of the Scriptures, engraven on their hearts. They were, therefore, prepared for speculations which destroyed his very nature, and were content with a blind instinctive power, productive of all changes, and struggling at last into intelligence in the human race. Such a God may do for a people who have been first steeped in infidelity for generations; but not for those who have been taught, with their first lispings, to say, "Our Father who art in heaven." The grand danger is, that this deadly poison will be introduced under false labels; that this atheism, enveloped in the scarcely intelligible formulas of the new philosophy, may be regarded as profound wisdom, and thus pass from mouth to mouth without being understood, until it becomes familiar and accredited. This process is going on before our eyes. It is not to be believed, that Dr. Henry, for example, has the least idea of Cousin's philosophy, which he is for ever recommending. Had he any insight into its nature, he would part with his right hand rather than be accessory to its propagation.* We feel it to be a solemn duty to warn our readers,

* Another Doctor in New York, according to the public papers, recently declared in an address, that Kant and Cousin were the two greatest philosophers of the age. This simple sentence betrays a world of ignorance. Kant may, indeed, be spoken of in such terms, because he did destroy one system, and introduce another, which had its day. But Cousin has neither pulled down, nor built up. He has merely transfused into French a weak dilution of German doctrines. He may be a man of learning and talents; this we

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which the spirit of darkness is employing ministe
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one will deny, that the Hegelian doctrines, as exhibi
are atheism in its worst form; and all who will read
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far as he has a system, is, as to the main point, ide
that of Hegel.

have no disposition to deny; but to call him one of the two
losophers of the age, only shows how a man or a system may
into notoriety, by those who know not whereof they affirm.





annexation to the United States, we can see no good which will result from it to either party, if it be speedily and hurriedly carried into effect. In the first place, there is no likelihood that the incongruous materials of which the population of British America is composed, torn and distracted as it now is, and as it must be, for some time to come, could be moulded into one homogeneous mass under the wisest plan that could be adopted; and if we could blend and bind together these discordant elements at will, it were better to defer the experiment, till the toil and trouble of fusing into one the mass already in our seething caldron are ended. Again, no great branch of our industry would be benefited by a closer intimacy, and no good derived from it which we may not enjoy without it. We have no need of additional wheat-lands or pine-forests; and if those on whom the duty devolves will but hold Great Britain to the long understood construction of our fishing rights under the convention of 1818, we shall have no use for more extensive fishing-grounds. Of coal we have abundance; and with regard to gypsum, Nova Scotia has never had any other customer, and until we parted with the vantage-ground, by McLane's arrangement, in 1830, we had always taken that bulky article on terms that permitted the use of our own tonnage. Least of all do we wish for increased competition in maritime enterprises. The Colonists can build vessels much cheaper than we can; and should they be allowed a share of our coasting trade, which now employs nearly two thirds of our whole shipping, the consequences would be disastrous to those portions of our people, whose location hardly leaves them liberty to choose any other employment.

In conclusion, we have a word of advice for one of the States most deeply interested in our relations with the British Colonies. Maine, by the treaty of Washington, has obtained a considerable extent of territory inhabited by people of French origin. We pray her to look to their welfare, and to make them part and parcel of her own citizens without delay. They are but a grain of mustard seed now, it is true; but the French, at the time of the conquest of Canada, were only a small part of the population of British America; and what have they become? Let the frontier State, then, be wise in time. Let her afford them the means of improving their husbandry and reconstructing their dwellings. Let

them be instructed in the elementary principles of our political system. And, above all, let their children at once be placed under school teachers who are competent and of pure life, who will teach them the Saxon tongue, and all the branches of education common to her best free schools. Else,

> "Nor happiness
> Domestic, mixed of tenderness and care,
> Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
> Nor guardian law were theirs; nor various skill
> To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
> Mechanic."

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ART. V.—*Memoir and Correspondence of* MRS. GRANT OF LAGGAN, Author of "Letters from the Mountains," "Memoirs of an American Lady," &c. Edited by her Son, J. P. GRANT, Esq. 3 vols., small 8vo. London. 1844.

WE shall begin a notice rather of Mrs. Grant herself than of the book just published, by speaking of her as she was in the latter period of her life. In 1820, she met with a severe accident, a fall, which produced permanent lameness, so that ever afterwards she was unable to move about without crutches. In 1827, when she was in her seventy-third year, she lost her only surviving daughter, Mary; and of a large family of children, but one son, the editor of her posthumous correspondence, remained. Her life had been marked by a peculiar series of domestic sorrows, and seemed to be closing in sadness and infirmity. If, shortly after this time, a well educated traveller from this country had visited Edinburgh, he would probably have been desirous to take a last look of one of whom he might have heard much to excite his respect and interest. He might naturally have expected to find her weighed down by age and affliction, broken in health and spirits. But, notwithstanding her lameness, this impression would soon have been removed in the course of a single visit. He would have seen a most respectable-looking old lady, with a countenance marked by

the traces of past suffering, but still cheerful and animated. He would have found her ready to converse, and conversing in a manner particularly unaffected and agreeable. If it had been in her power to render him, as a stranger, any small services, which might very likely have been the case, from her extensive connections with society, no one would have been more ready to think of and to offer them. Her sympathies were unchilled. Through them she was still able to give and receive pleasure. She was an extraordinary woman, a woman of uncommon strength and excellence of character.

The impression which she was likely to make on a stranger is expressed in a passage of a letter to her by one who had visited her shortly before writing it, which is given in the introductory memoir to the volumes under review. We quote it in this place principally because it is not quite correctly printed, and we happen to have a copy of the original before us. "It was delightful," says the writer, "to find you in old age, after such severe trials, so supported and strengthened by the power of God, — not resigned merely, possessing not the calm benevolence of age alone, but all the kinder feelings in their freshness and flower, which, beautiful as they are in youth, become so much more deeply interesting when we know that care and sorrow have had no power to wither them, and that they will soon form part of that crown of glory which fadeth not. If we could have forgotten the blessings which God has for a time taken to himself, and is reserving for you in his keeping, we might have thought of you only as one,

> 'Whose cheerful day benevolence endears,
> Whose night congratulating conscience cheers,
> The general favorite, as the general friend.'"

In what follows we shall give a short account of the life and writings of Mrs. Grant. It may serve to explain in part why she was regarded with strong affection by many friends, and even by friends to whom she was personally unknown; and it may prepare one for reading with more interest the volumes just published. We shall bring together facts which have not before been presented in connection. Besides her published writings, we have some other sources of information, and especially two manuscript collections,

with which we have been kindly favored, of copies of her letters, addressed to two American friends, only one of which letters appears in the present collection. To the volumes of her correspondence just published a brief memoir is prefixed, partly autobiographical, the conclusion being furnished by the editor. But the events of her earlier life are principally to be gathered from her "Memoirs of an American Lady."

The maiden name of Mrs. Grant was Anne Macvicar. She was born at Glasgow, on the 21st of February, 1755, — the daughter of Duncan Macvicar, whom she describes as "a plain, brave, pious man." Of her mother, who survived till 1811, dying in her daughter's house in Edinburgh in her eighty-fourth year, there are but few notices in her writings; and those few may lead one to think, that she was not in all respects qualified to instruct and open the mind of her child. "I dearly loved idleness," says Mrs. Grant, in her "Memoirs of an American Lady," "and the more, because my mother, who delighted in needle-work, confined me too much to it." This was when she was five years old; and she mentions more than once "the long tasks and close confinement," which she had to endure in her childhood.

Her father was a subaltern in a regiment ordered for America, and sailed for this country in 1757. He was followed by his wife and child the next year. These he established at Claverack, on the Hudson, about thirty-five miles below Albany, at board with a "worthy, wealthy, and most primitive" Dutch family. Here little Anne was taught to read by her mother, and learned to talk Dutch; and learned too, as at a later period she believed, "among the primitive worthies of the settlement, that love of truth and simplicity which she afterwards found a charm against artifice and pretension of every kind." Her only books were a primer and the Bible. She grew in time familiar with the Old Testament; and, in addition to her books, a Scotch sergeant brought her the ballad of "Blind Harry's Wallace." He assisted her to understand its broad Scotch; and the ballad filled her with youthful enthusiasm for Scotland and its hero.

In 1760, when Anne was five years old, her father, who had been stationed at Oswego, rejoined his family. She represents herself as having been strongly impressed by his

religious character, in comparison with that of other military men with whom she had been acquainted. He did not swear, and he prayed. His family accompanied him, on his return to Oswego, whither he was conducting a company to join the garrison at that place. A great part of the journey was through an uncultivated wilderness. It was full of romantic incident, and presented a succession of picturesque scenery, rendered more striking by the passage of soldiery forcing their slow way through those lonely retreats of nature. The mind of a lively and imaginative child could not but be strongly affected by it; and Mrs. Grant has given a vivid description of it in her "Memoirs of an American Lady." "I am convinced," she says, "that I thought more in that fortnight, that is, acquired more ideas, and took more lasting impressions, than ever I did in the same space of time in my life."

Anne, with her parents, remained the succeeding winter and spring in the fort at Oswego; and no particular incident seems to have diversified what must have been to her a dull life in that remote garrison. But in the summer of 1762, when she was seven years old, her father returned, with his wife and child, to join a body of troops stationed at Albany. Anne left nothing behind her which was near her heart, but a tame partridge and six pigeons.

On the journey back, occurred one of the most eventful incidents of her early life. The party arrived in the evening at a fort on the Mohawk, where Captain Campbell, an old friend of her father, was stationed. The rest of the story must be given in her own words.

"On that evening we returned to Fort Bruerton. I found Captain Campbell delighted with my reading, my memory, and my profound admiration of the friendship betwixt David and Jonathan. We staid the most of the next day. I was much captivated with the copperplates in an edition of Paradise Lost, which, on that account, he had given me to admire. When I was coming away, he said to me, "Keep that book, my dear child; I foretell that the time will come when you will take pleasure in it." Never did a present produce such joy and gratitude. I thought I was dreaming, and looked at it a hundred times, before I could believe any thing so fine was really my own. I tried to read it, and almost cried with vexation when I found I could not understand it. At length I quitted it in de-

spair; yet always said to myself, I shall be wiser next year."—*Memoirs of an American Lady*, p. 238. American Ed.

This volume was the means of introducing her to the most distinguished woman of the Province of New York, Madam Schuyler; who, though she herself continued a Royalist to the last, was aunt of the eminent and excellent General Schuyler, to whose services in our American Revolution due honor has not yet been paid. At Albany, in a waste-room, where she found a tattered dictionary, Anne, by the aid of this, and with occasional assistance from those who were able and willing to help her through her difficulties, studied out the meaning of her Milton, feeling an absorbing interest in the pursuit, which a student of riper years might well envy. This is the kind of study which benefits the mind. Impressions thus received are ineffaceable. "Time ran on," is her own account, given in after life; "I was eight years old, and quite uneducated, except reading and plain-work. When company came, I was considered as in the way, and sent up to my waste-room; but here lay my whole pleasure; for I had neither companions nor amusement."

Meanwhile, the fame of Madam Schuyler reached her ears, and she was earnestly desirous of seeing her. The opportunity at last arrived. Her father took lodgings in Albany, in a house next to that lady's; and she, being pleased with what she heard of his character, sent an invitation to the family to pass the evening with her. "With no little awe and agitation," says Mrs. Grant, "I came into the presence of Madame." But she was now about to receive a great reward for her faithful study of Milton. She says:

"In the course of the evening, dreams began to be talked of; and every one in turn gave their opinion with regard to that wonderful mode, in which the mind acts independent of the senses, asserting its immaterial nature in a manner the most conclusive. I mused and listened, till at length the spirit of quotation (which very early began to haunt me) moved me to repeat, from Paradise Lost,

> 'When nature rests,
> Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes,
> To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
> Wild work produces oft.'

I sat silent when my bolt was shot; but so did not Madame. Astonished to hear her favorite author quoted readily by so

mere a child, she attached much more importance to the circumstance than it deserved; so much, indeed, that, long after, she used to repeat it to strangers in my presence, by way of accounting for the great fancy she had taken to me. These partial repetitions of hers fixed this lucky quotation indelibly in my mind." — *Memoirs of an American Lady*, pp. 243, 244.*

The connection thus formed grew stronger, and had an important influence on Anne's happiness and improvement,

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* It is remarkable, that of the manner of her introduction to the notice of Madam Schuyler Mrs. Grant has given three different accounts, each inconsistent in its details with both of the others. That quoted above has the appearance of being the most correct. In the autobiographical memoir, prefixed to the posthumous collection of her letters, she says: "Some time after our arrival at Albany, I accompanied my parents one evening to visit Madame Schuyler. . . . . The conversation fell upon dreams and forewarnings. I rarely spoke till spoken to, at any time; but, of a sudden, the spirit moved me to say, that bad angels sometimes whispered dreams into the soul. When asked for my authority, I surprised every one, but myself most of all, by a long quotation from Eve's fatal dream, infusing into her mind the ambition that led to guilt. After this happy quotation I became a great favorite, and Madame Schuyler never failed to tell any one who had read Milton of the origin of her partiality."

But the quotation given above, which Mrs. Grant supposed to have been indelibly fixed in her mind, is not a long quotation from Eve's account of her dream, but is taken from Adam's reply to her; and nothing is said in it about bad angels whispering dreams into the soul.

Again; in her "Letters from the Mountains," (Letter XXI.,) she says: "My father attracted Madame Schuyler's notice by his piety, not very frequently a distinguishing feature in the military character. I will not tire you with the detail of all the little circumstances that gradually acquired me the place in her favor which I ever continued to possess. *She saw me reading Paradise Lost with delighted attention;* she was astonished to see a child take pleasure in such a book, and no less so to observe, that I loved to sit thoughtful by her, and hear the conversations of elderly and grave people."

These three passages strikingly illustrate the fact, that a story may be unquestionably true in all its essential characteristics and bearings, though individuals who have been placed in the best possible circumstances for knowing the truth — eye and ear witnesses — may differ from each other irreconcilably in their details of it. We have here three narratives of a single individual relating to an incident adapted to make a deep impression on her memory, and they are irreconcilable.

The general truth just mentioned has not often been very grossly disregarded, except by those who have objected to the essential truth of the facts recorded in the Gospels on account of the unessential discrepancies in the narrations of them by different Evangelists. But it is a truth which does not appear to have dawned upon the minds of some of the modern German writers of this class. Adopting their style of criticism on the Gospels, and applying it to Mrs. Grant's narratives, we should undoubtedly conclude, that the whole story about Milton was a *myth*, and that Mrs. Schuyler was probably a *mythical* personage; especially as, in immediate connection with one of the narratives quoted, Mrs. Grant expressly says, that she "regarded her as the Minerva of her imagination."

during the remaining four years which she spent in America. Mrs. Schuyler, who had no children of her own, appears to have become much attached to the intelligent little girl who loved and revered her, and to have found her often her most pleasant companion.

She now obtained access to more books, and among them to Shakspeare, and was not a little mortified when she found herself unable to appreciate his merits. "I thought his plays," she says, "very inferior to Cato, whom Aunt [Madam] Schuyler had taught me to admire." But she persevered in their study.

"'I remember,' she relates, 'reading Hamlet the third or fourth time, in a frosty night, by moonlight, in the back porch. This reiterated perusal was not in consequence of any great pleasure it afforded me; but I was studiously laboring to discover the excellence I thought it must needs contain; yet with more diligence than success.'" — *Memoirs of an American Lady*, p. 288.

Her mind gradually unfolded, and Shakspeare became to her a new source of delight. But her efforts at intellectual improvement were pursued under great disadvantages and discouragements. At one time, a terrible decree went forth, that she was to read no more "idle books or plays." She had, it may be feared, neglected her sewing tasks. She was driven to read books of divinity, probably Calvinistic divinity. But, with a degree of casuistry, in which young people are apt to display their talents on such occasions, she persuaded herself that the spirit of the prohibition did not exclude the reading of the historical plays, because they were true; and in the lapse of time, she evidently regarded the decree itself as having become obsolete.

In 1768, when she was thirteen years old, her father, who had been suffering much in his spirits and health, determined to return with his wife and child to Scotland, and Anne left America never to see it again. Thus ends one epoch of her long, eventful, and changing life, during which she had to do and to suffer much, and was brought into close connection with very different forms of life, and very different classes of mankind. In America she had become acquainted with the primitive manners of the Dutch settlers on the Hudson, she had spent months in a garrisoned fort on Lake Ontario,

she had been familiar with our aborigines, who still dwelt in the neighbourhood of Albany; she had, in company with her father, visited a great Indian king or chief in his palace or wigwam on the Mohawk, and "went out of the royal presence overawed and delighted"; she was in a few years to become the wife of a Highland clergyman, and to dwell among another portion of mankind scarcely less peculiar, and not less romantic in their aspect, than our native Indians; and thence she was to be removed to associate familiarly with a highly cultivated and intellectual circle, that drew upon itself the gaze of the world.

On her return to Scotland, her father entered into some kind of business at Glasgow, and here she remained, without any particular incident to mark her life, till the commencement of her nineteenth year. She here, however, formed an intimate friendship with two young ladies, sisters, of the name of Ewing, and with another, Henrietta Reid. It continued with each of them till it was dissolved by death. The two former appear in the last collection of her letters under the names of Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown. To Miss Reid many of her earlier printed letters are addressed. This lady was soon, but not happily, married. Her husband was unfortunate in business, and other circumstances contributed to her discomfort. "She was," says Mrs. Grant, "a perfect model of patient meekness, always suffering, never complaining, frugal, industrious, and preserving not the equanimity only, but the dignity and delicacy of her mind, through all exigencies." Her family increased rapidly, and she died in giving birth to her eleventh child.*

In 1773, Mrs. Grant's father received the appointment of Barrack-master of Fort Augustus, in Inverness-shire, and removed his family thither. With her journey to that place commences the portion of Mrs. Grant's correspondence which was published under the title of "Letters from the Mountains." The first forty of them contain an account of the incidents of her life, with notices and sketches of friends and acquaintance, during the six years between her leaving Glasgow and her marriage (when twenty-four years old) in May, 1779. Her residence during this period was at Fort Augustus, where she formed a friendship with Miss Ourry,

* MS. Letter.

afterwards Mrs. Furzer, to whom many of her letters are addressed. On the first evening after her arrival there, she met her future husband, the Rev. James Grant.

The account of the events and concerns of her life during the interval just mentioned, to be read with interest, must be read in her own letters. The society at Fort Augustus was, in general, far from being agreeable; and in her circumstances, there could, for the most part, have been nothing very gratifying. Whatever she effected for her own improvement it would seem that she must have done with little aid from without. Yet there is no repining in her letters. Her cheerfulness and alacrity of mind do not appear to have failed.

Her residence at Fort Augustus was terminated by her marriage. This connection, as regards both the character and the circumstances of her husband, seems to have been peculiarly adapted to make her happy. She was free from the cravings and sufferings of vanity and the love of display. She had no tendency to regard herself as an extraordinary personage, to whom her fellow-creatures were in danger of doing injustice by neglect. In her simplicity and true-heartedness, she was happy to be the wife of an obscure Highland clergyman, without the least thought of ever becoming famous; though pleased, without doubt, to gratify her friends by her talents in writing letters and making verses, and by the vivacity of her conversation. While she was faithfully performing her duties in the secluded parish of Laggan, of which her husband was the pastor, few things could have seemed less probable than that she should become known to the world. But for circumstances that could not be anticipated, she would probably have lived and died in the Highlands, one of those "of whom Fame speaks not," but

> "gentle hearts rejoice
> Around their steps, — till silently they die."

In truth, the fame of Mrs. Grant, if it may be so called, was in great part only an expression of esteem for those admirable qualities of character, exercised in domestic and private life, which her vicissitudes and sufferings were accidentally the means of bringing into public view.

Somewhat more than two years after her marriage, she wrote to her friend, Miss Ewing, describing her situation. The letter is dated at Fort Augustus, where she was on a visit. She says:

"You will think I am talking very solemnly about travelling the twenty-five miles between here and Laggan; for I do not know that ever I told you how peculiarly we are situated with regard to each other. This district is divided from ours by an immense mountain called *Corryarrick*. That barrier is impassable in the depth of winter, as the top of it is above the region of clouds; and the sudden descent on the other side peculiarly dangerous, not only from deep snows concealing the unbeaten track of the road, but from whirlwinds and eddies that drive the snow into heaps; besides an evil spirit which the country people devoutly believe to have dwelt there time out of mind.

"I was rather urgent in requesting permission to make this visit, because my little daughter is here, who loves me and smiles on me irresistibly, and whom I must needs leave as a substitute for myself; and then I resolved to enjoy the last fading gleams of autumn here, and embrace my dear parents before I should be separated from them all winter by this dreadful barrier. The society is varied by some new characters; not military ones, but just such harmless, good-humored people as one takes a pleasure in pleasing, and leaves without a pang. My mate has chosen this time to visit his Strathspey friends. I am beginning to be on the spur homeward; snow is now beginning to fall; but though I should 'ride on clouds and skies,' I must get home immediately.

"Now I will give you a sketch of our situation, and you will say 't is time. After crossing this awful mountain, we travel eastward through twelve miles of bleak, inhospitable country, inhabited only by moor-fowl, and adorned with here and there a booth, erected for a temporary shelter to shepherds, who pass the summer with their flocks in these lonely regions. On leaving this waste, you enter a vale six miles in length, and half a mile broad, which wants nothing but wood to be beautiful; it has indeed some copses, or what the Scottish bards call shaws. This vale consists entirely of rich meadow and arable lands, and has the clear and rapid Spey running through the middle of it. About the centre of this vale, at the foot of a mountain which screens it from the north wind, stands our humble dwelling." — *Letters from the Mountains*, Vol. I., pp. 222–224.

This residence she elsewhere describes as a "comfortable cottage, consisting of four rooms, light closets, and a nursery and kitchen built out by way of addition."

"You will wonder," she continues, "we have not the good house to which the pastor's office entitles him. That should be

built on the glebe, and can be nowhere else, and this glebe is a nook which none but a hermit would inhabit. Then we are so far from market, that, unless the ravens were commissioned to feed us, we could not do without a farm; which affording us every necessary of life, we send to Inverness (only fifty miles off) for elegances and superfluities; elegant sugar, and superfluous tea, for instance. The last incumbent preferred getting this farm at an easy rate and living in a cottage of his own building, to a more elegant mansion without that advantage; and we have made the same sacrifice of vanity to convenience. We have a great extent of moor and hill grazing, where they say we may feed some hundreds of sheep, a very suitable flock for a person who ought to be much detached from secular cares, having a shepherd kept purposely to attend them. They require even in winter no food or shelter, but what the hills afford. Our neighbours abound in courtesy and civility, and many of them, having been abroad in the army, are sufficiently intelligent." — *Letters from the Mountains*, Vol. I., pp. 224, 225.

During her married life, her principal sufferings seem to have arisen from that severe calamity which pursued her through her after years, the sickness and death of her children. But she was about to meet with a still heavier loss. The following simple and affecting narrative of her afflictions is from her autobiographical memoir. A gentleman, Mr. Mackintosh of Dunchattan, who was uncle by marriage to Sir John Moore,

"procured a commission in the army for our eldest son, John Lauchlan, then a mere boy, but a most amiable and promising one: he died in Glasgow, of consumption, in his sixteenth year. This was a great blow, and bore heavy on his father, whose health had been always very precarious. I had mourned over three children, who died previously, in early infancy. The birth of my youngest child, a fortnight after the death of his brother, carried off my thoughts, in some degree, from this affliction. The daily decline of Mr. Grant's health, though I was unwilling to see it, now forced itself on my attention. He outlived his son eighteen months. — I cannot go through details ever painful to memory: suffice it that he was removed in 1801, after an attack of inflammation of three days' continuance; and I was thus left with eight children, not free from debt, yet owing less than might be expected, considering the size of our family, and the decent hospitality, which was kept up in a manner that, on looking back, astonishes even myself, as it did others at the time.

I was too much engrossed with my irreparable loss on the one hand, and too much accustomed to a firm reliance on the fatherly care of Him who will not abandon the children of a righteous man, on the other, to have any fears for the support of so many helpless creatures. I felt a confidence on their account that to many might appear romantic and extravagant." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. I., pp. 13, 14.

From this time till the close of her long days, Mrs. Grant continued to be *a traveller between life and death*. She had said of herself, at a much earlier period, in a letter to her friend, Miss Ourry, —

"My meditations hover so constantly about the confines of the world unknown, where my aching eyes are continually exploring the departing footsteps of those who still live in my remembrance, that I now see this world and all its vanities, as the Apostle says we do futurity, 'through a glass, darkly.' These frequent excursions of the mind into the trackless ocean of vast eternity contribute not a little to throw a dim shade over every thing that dazzles and attracts in this valley of vision." — *Letters from the Mountains*, Vol. II., p. 32.

At her husband's death, she was left in circumstances above absolute want. "But my friends," she says, "were more apprehensive of pecuniary distress for me than I was for myself." Some of them, during her married life, had urged her to write for the booksellers; but for this she had had neither inclination nor leisure. Her family duties and interests pressed too much upon her thoughts and her time to allow her to engage in mere literary labor. It was during the nights of winter or in the dawn of summer mornings, that she found time to write those letters to the friends of her early days, that first made her advantageously known to the world. At the same time she distrusted her abilities for the proposed task. Of her powers, no one, from first to last, seems to have formed a more correct estimate than herself. Her mind was too sound, and she was too free from vanity, to be deluded by the partiality of those who loved her while yet generally unknown, or by the celebrity which she afterwards obtained.

But it was her lot to become an authoress. "I had early," she says, "discovered a faculty of rhyming, scarcely worthy to be dignified with the name of poetry, but easy

and fluent." A considerable number of her short poems had been dispersed among her friends, of which she had retained no copy. These they now collected and determined to publish by subscription. She was induced to revise and add to them. Her friends were numerous and warmly attached to her. Her husband's memory was respected, and her circumstances, wherever made known, excited interest. The Duchess of Gordon, who resided during summer at a seat near Laggan, warmly patronized the proposal; and it was uncommonly successful. Three thousand copies of the volume were subscribed for. It appeared in 1803.

In June of the same year, she was deprived of her father, just as she had sold off her farm stock and all her property at Laggan, for the purpose of removing nearer to her parents, who then lived at Glasgow. This event changed her plans. She took a sorrowful departure from Laggan toward the end of that month, and removed to Woodend, a beautiful, but sequestered spot in the neighbourhood of Stirling. Besides her own large family, including her mother, she had with her three children from the West Indies, who were placed under her care. Her pecuniary means were enlarged by the compensation which she received for this charge;* and they continued to be so from a similar source during the greater part of her remaining life. Many young ladies were successively intrusted to her care as inmates of her family; and the interest which she felt in them, and the gratitude and affection which they retained for her, contributed much to her happiness. But the number at any one time was not great. She speaks in one of her letters of being able to fill a large house, if she received under her tuition all who applied for it. "But," she adds, "I see daily more reason to restrict the number of my pupils to three or four." The great benefit which Mrs. Grant was expected to afford her pupils was, not so much literary instruction, as her influence in forming their minds and manners, and, at a later period, when she removed to Edinburgh, an introduction into the society which frequented her house.

At Woodend, Mrs. Grant appears to have been removed into an uncongenial soil. She had lost him who was dearest

* MS. Letter.

to her ; she missed greatly the warm feelings of her former friends, and the affections of the humble cottagers at Laggan. Wide in her own sympathies, she was greatly dependent for her happiness on the sympathy of others, on friendship, and on that social intercourse which is not a mere reciprocation of civilities, but in which heart speaks to heart and mind mingles with mind. "I think," she says in one of her letters after her removal, "I could not desire to live a day longer than while my heart was warmed by an affectionate intercourse with those I love." And of this intercourse, out of her own family, she enjoyed but little at Woodend. One lady, however, formed an exception to the general character of the society about her. "Of Lady Stewart," she says, "my kind departed friend, I must ever think with the gratitude I owed to her, and with the esteem which every one paid to her merits. She was my next, my kindest, I might well say my only kind neighbour at Woodend. By others in the vicinity I was little known and less understood." In 1806, she removed to Stirling.

The same year, a little before her removal, her second work, the "Letters from the Mountains," appeared. The circumstances which led to its publication were particularly affecting. As they are referred to in her Memoir, and stated, though briefly, in her posthumous correspondence, we do not hesitate to give them a little more in detail from a long narrative contained in an unpublished letter lying before us.

The correspondence forming the "Letters from the Mountains" had been preserved and collected by her friends; and its publication was strongly urged upon her by them, as a means of pecuniary benefit. The letters were put into her hands, and she finally undertook to revise and prepare them for the press; not with the thought of publishing them during her lifetime, from which she shrunk with great reluctance, but in the hope that they might be of benefit to her children, if she should be taken from them. "While," she says, "I was thus retracing the past, and tasting the sweets and bitters of recollection, the thunder burst over my head, which for a time blasted all my remains of comfort."

Her eldest surviving son, Duncan, who, after making all allowance for the partiality of a mother's praise, appears to have been an uncommonly promising youth, had determined, contrary to her inclination, to enter the army. He was

then at the age of sixteen, pursuing his military studies at Marlow; and she had just received the gratifying intelligence, that he had made such proficiency, that in ten days he would be removed as a cadet to Woolwich.

"I perceived," she says, "just about that time, a degree of smothered anguish in the countenance of my daughter, that surprised me; but thought that she had, perhaps, in looking over the letters, seen something that had made her memory bleed afresh with recollected sorrows, and I wished to dissipate them as best I could. I was under engagements to dine at Stirling with an old military friend of my father's, and had business also of some kind to transact. Mary pleaded a headache, and would not accompany me. On which, I took her sisters with me, and returned in the evening pensive enough. No one came to meet me, or seemed glad of my return. Mary, my eldest, followed me into my own room, and told me to collect all my courage and dependence on Divine Providence, and expect the worst I could possibly hear. 'To whom does it relate?' 'To Duncan.' 'What has he done?' 'Covered us with disgrace and sorrow such as we never knew.' It rushed into my mind that he could never *live* in ignominy, and I sunk on the ground in agony from an idea too horrid to express. 'Has the immortal spirit yielded to despair? Is the door of repentance open?' 'Yes, but he is disgraced.' I rose on my knees to thank God that he had not abandoned him beyond hope. I then read a letter, which Mary had concealed till my visit and business were over, well knowing how incapable I should be, after hearing it, of doing any thing. I found that my son had been engaged in a mutiny that broke out among the youths at Marlow, occasioned by overstrained severity of discipline. But how my son should be involved seemed inexplicable, considering his steady, manly character, and his approaching removal, which made it to him a matter of indifference how Marlow was governed. In the extreme anguish of my spirit, I sat down and wrote a few lines of earnest expostulation to the Duke of York; taking the guilt of the culprit for granted, yet pleading the ruin and desolation in which his final destiny would involve a family, whose honor, stained in him, was their chief earthly possession. That unhappy and culpable, yet truly humane, character returned me, of whom he knew nothing but my distress, an answer by the very next post, saying, that even his compassion could not avail, as the fatal sentence was past, and none but his Majesty (then greatly indisposed) could interfere with the sentence of a court martial; but that, if I had another son duly qualified, he would recommend

him to a commission in the line. In the mean time my unhappy son, with six others, was sentenced to be cashiered and rendered incapable of serving his Majesty."

She felt this as an indelible stigma. She dreaded that her son would be driven to desperation. But he was taken home by a lady (the daughter of Mrs. Dunlop, the friend of Burns) to her house in London, and soothed by pity and kindness. He was thus prevented from taking shelter on board a man-of-war, as he first intended.

"Meantime, his patron, the excellent and well known Mr. Charles Grant, Chairman at the India House, went to Marlow to examine into the merits of the cause. He found the concurring testimony of all concerned to his previous good behaviour, and attention both to duty and study. The night the riot arose he was at his post of sentinel, and did not join the rioters. Those detected in arms were imprisoned; and two days after, as Duncan walked the parade, the colonel who presided over the college asked him, 'where he was that night'; he said, 'On his post.' He then asked, if he 'knew any thing previously of this design, or how many were embarked in it besides those detected.' He said he knew well of their intention, and how many were embarked in it, and that there were a great number. On this, the colonel insisted on his naming them. This, Duncan said, was impossible. They had consulted him on the proposed enterprise, he had given them his honor not to betray them, but advised them to desist, and told them he had no interest in the affair, being immediately to remove to Woolwich. On hearing all this, the colonel was extremely incensed at his obstinacy in keeping the secret, and brought him to trial, when he was convicted, on an article of war which orders a sentinel in such a case to fire, because he had not fired at his companions on that fatal night when they did not answer."

When she found that her son's conduct was not accounted morally dishonorable, Mrs. Grant was greatly relieved. But she was much at a loss what to do. Her friend, Mrs. Furzer, who was residing at Richmond, urged her to come to London, in order that she might there settle her son's future destination. On this she determined; and accordingly, in the middle of winter, took passage for that place. She went by sea, from motives of frugality.

In London, Mrs. Grant succeeded in making the most desirable arrangement for her son, which could then be effected.

He was appointed a cadet in the East India Company's service. His course was honorable; he rose rapidly in his profession; and gave joy and hope to his mother. But the objects of her affection were continually taken from her. He died at Surat, in 1814.*

The expenses attendant on this business, and especially on her son's equipment for India, pressed heavily on Mrs. Grant. "It encroached," she says, "on the very little I had reserved for my daughters." In this exigency, to avoid diminishing what she "considered as the family stock," she yielded to the solicitations of her friends, and reluctantly determined to make trial of the publication of her letters.

She consequently obtained an introduction to Messrs. Longman & Co. "I went to them," she says, "with no enviable feelings, being fully as much ashamed of my shabby manuscript as Falstaff was of his ragged recruits." Mr. Longman, however, received her graciously, and in a few days she was informed that the letters would do very well for publication. This was in the spring of 1805. She returned to Scotland, and heard nothing more of her book till the spring of the following year. She began to despair of its ever being published. But at last she received a letter informing her that it was printed, and only needed a preface. The preface was written and despatched in half an hour. The "Letters from the Mountains" appeared; and "no person, I believe," says Mrs. Grant, "was so astonished at their success as myself." They rapidly passed through several editions. Her booksellers were liberal; and, to use her own words, "many persons of distinguished worth interested themselves in me, and sought my acquaintance, in consequence of perusing those letters." As one example of the strong interest which they excited, it may be mentioned that a present of three hundred pounds was sent to

* It may afford a further illustration of the fact adverted to in a preceding note, to observe, that, in the narrative quoted above, Mrs. Grant says that her son was sentenced on the ground, that, being a sentinel, the night of the mutiny, he did not fire on his companions; while in a letter to Mr. Hatsell (Memoirs and Correspondence, Vol. I., p. 71) she gives this account: "He was made the unfortunate depositary of a foolish and desperate combination. . . . . He took no active part; but, on being examined, refused to give up the names of the rest; accounting such disclosure dishonorable. His size and manly appearance led the Court to consider him a ringleader; and as such, he was (I am told, unjustly) sentenced."

her by three merchants of London, (Mr. Angerstein, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Bonar,) with whom she appears to have had no previous acquaintance. When the profits of her work began to come in, which, for the second edition, amounted to another three hundred pounds, she says, "I calculate and wonder at my own wealth."

On the last day of the year in which they appeared, she thus wrote to her old friend, Mrs. Smith:

"Do not in the least fear for my head, in consequence of the success of the Letters. In the first place, the only kind of pride I ever cherished was like those weeds which grow in a poor soil, and disappear when it is ameliorated. It served no other purpose but to fence in a kind of humble dignity. I valued myself just as highly when I was treated by many insignificant people with contemptuous indifference, as now that it is the fashion of the hour for people, every way my superiors, to overrate me. I very well know, too, that the peculiarity of the subject, the lively, because true, delineation of scenes to which the world, particularly the English world, is a stranger, has excited attention fully more than the merits of the performance. Johnson, who all along hated and despised pastorals, — being a kind of writing from which learning, philosophy, and cookery were equally excluded, and in which people were neither witty nor wise, sententious nor categorical, — he, I say, used to excuse his contempt for this way of writing, because, he said, we should never see a pastoral written by a real shepherd; and modes of life drawn from conjecture did not suit his rectitude of taste. But here is a pastoral written by a real shepherd; here are simple manners and rural life, — humble, though not mean, — simple, though not vulgar, — truly drawn. Truth of sentiment is a hidden, but powerful charm; the heart and imagination are detained by it, as the reasoning faculties are gratified by moral truth or mathematical demonstration. I am getting into too deep water now." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. I., pp. 89, 90.

There is no vanity in this; and she seems never to have been betrayed into any exhibition of it by the great success of her work.

Gratified she must have been; but a very different scene was about to open upon her. Her life was one of great vicissitude. In the spring after the letter was written from which we have just quoted, she was summoned to London to attend the death-bed of her daughter Charlotte, whom she

lost at the age of seventeen. She returned to Scotland to find her second daughter, Catharine, dangerously ill; and after an interval of three months, this young lady followed her sister, dying in her twenty-fifth year.

"I had lost children before," says Mrs. Grant, "but I was not then their *only* parent." She thus wrote to her friend, Mrs. Hook:

"What is there valued and admired, what is there truly valuable or admirable, that I have not lost! — youth, beauty, innocence, understanding, affection, such as few hearts are capable of conceiving, of which I was the first and darling object. To be thus beloved by creatures so lovely and so excellent, — this, indeed, is a privation. But they love me still; I am conscious that they do." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. I., p. 126.

But though Mrs. Grant felt deeply and truly, and kept sacred in her heart the memory of those she loved, there was, happily for herself and for others, an extraordinary elasticity and resilience in her spirits. Proofs of this soon begin to show themselves in her letters; and about a month after the death of her daughter Catharine, it appears from a letter full of affectionate remembrances of her, that she was about to commence writing her "Memoirs of an American Lady." It was published the next year, 1808.

The American lady was Mrs. Schuyler, the friend of her youth. But Mrs. Grant's recollections of her do not constitute the greater part of the work. It consists, besides these, of her own autobiography till the time of her leaving America; of sketches of the history of New York; of accounts of the manners of the descendants of the Dutch settlers at Albany and in its neighbourhood; of anecdotes of the Indians; and of stories respecting private individuals. What did not fall within her personal experience as a child, she appears to have learned from the oral narratives and conversation of Mrs. Schuyler and other individuals, without correction from books, or from any subsequent inquiry. On the basis of her very youthful recollections, affected, without doubt, by the imaginations and prejudices of after years, she constructed this work at the age of fifty-two. It is not without interest, as may appear from the references which we have made to it; but no one will suppose that it can make

much pretension to accuracy; though, even in this respect, it might not be quite fair to judge of it from the first sentence of the first chapter: "It is well known, that *the province of New York*, anciently called Munhattoes by the Indians," (Mrs. Grant refers to the Indian name of the island on which the city of New York now stands,) "was originally settled by a Dutch colony, which came from Holland, *I think, in the time of Charles the Second.*" Mrs. Grant says of herself in one of her earlier letters, "I am a wretched narrator, and miserable chronologer; I write fluently from my heart; but very lamely from my memory." We cannot assent to the first assertion, "I am a wretched narrator," so far as regards events in which she was personally interested.

In the year following the publication of these Memoirs, (1809,) an event occurred highly gratifying to Mrs. Grant. A gentleman, now one of the most honored clergymen of our country, who had then just completed his theological studies at Edinburgh, brought, on his return home, a copy of her "Letters from the Mountains." It passed into the hands of his sister, whose memory, after a lapse of more than thirty years, is still cherished with affectionate veneration by her surviving friends. She possessed a kindred mind to Mrs. Grant's, and was strongly interested in her book and in her fortunes. She communicated her interest to a circle of her friends. The book, through their exertions, was republished by subscription, at a time when the republication of a foreign work in this country was far less common than at present; and two hundred pounds were remitted to her as the proceeds. A correspondence immediately commenced between the lady, Miss Lowell, who was the principal agent in this good work, and Mrs. Grant, which continued during a short interval of not two years which intervened before Miss Lowell's death.

It may be easily imagined how much Mrs. Grant, with her warm and grateful feelings, was affected by this unexpected act of kindness, and this expression of sympathy from a country, then much more separated from England than it is at present. The impression that it made on her partly appears from the fact, that in a very short autobiographical notice which she communicated to a publication in England, consisting, with the exception of a single line, of only two

paragraphs, one of these paragraphs is devoted to the mention of it. She says:

"Among the many singular events, by which a quiet, secluded life has been diversified, one of the most remarkable was the benevolence and warmth of friendship, which prompted an American lady, of distinguished worth and talents, to make a very uncommon exertion in behalf of the subject of this Memoir. Meeting accidentally with the "Letters from the Mountains," this ardent and superior mind, not satisfied with warm approbation, and the elegant expression of these feelings to the author, actually, with the assistance of some friends, reprinted the work at Boston, (New England,) and remitted the profits to the author. This lady, now beyond the reach of human praise, closed an exemplary life amidst her fondly attached friends and relations in 1811. She was daughter to the late eminent Judge Lowell, of New England." *

In a letter to a lady, who, after the death of Miss Lowell, became the medium of communication between Mrs. Grant and her American friends, she says: "The attraction which the pictures of my mind had for that pure spirit now released, I consider as the pride and honor of my life. Of the many consolations which it pleased the Divine Goodness to pour into my cup of affliction I felt none so sensibly."

Her "Memoirs of an American Lady" came to a second edition in London in 1809, and was reprinted the same year by a bookseller at New York, in consequence, doubtless, of the popularity of her "Letters from the Mountains." Near the end of this book, there are two chapters of "General Reflections," in which, and in other passages, Mrs. Grant gives a most disastrous picture of the moral, intellectual, and social state of this country. This led to a remonstrance in a letter from her friend, Miss Lowell. Nothing could be written more becoming a lady. Though decided in its tone, it is most gentle and kind. How Mrs. Grant was affected by it may appear from some passages in her reply. She begins her letter thus; — we omit some of the stronger expressions of regret:

"How shall I address, with language expressive of my feelings, a person, who fills my whole heart with mingled sensations of respect and gratitude, sympathy, tenderness, and remorse, to which no language could do justice? This day I received that letter which I shall ever preserve with veneration, as a hallowed

* The British Gallery of Contemporary Portraits, No. XX., 1815.

relic of an unequalled mind. This night I will not sleep till I disburden my overcharged heart by acknowledging it. How cruel, dear Madam, is your candor, how wounding your mildness! . . . . . Had you urged on me the presumption of obtruding on the public as a picture of what *is* a confused and imperfect recollection of what *was*, aggravated by the only accounts I have for many years heard from that country, from exasperated and heart-broken emigrants, or half-pay officers, who had only seen it burning and bleeding with the flames and wounds of civil discord; had you said all that severe truth could suggest on this, to me, most painful subject, I might have been tempted to say much in my own vindication. Still I must say that I did not advance any thing but what I was convinced at the time was true, though I omitted acquiring that information, which I ought sedulously to have sought after, before I had committed myself or risked giving wrong impressions to others."

The connection between Miss Lowell and Mrs. Grant extended to other members of the family of the former lady. Her nephew, Mr. John Lowell, Jr., so well known for the splendid bequest by which he founded the Lowell Lectures in Boston, resided, when a youth, for some years, in Edinburgh with his parents. "He retained to the last an affectionate recollection of the friendships formed by him at this early period; and during his travels in the East, toward the close of his life, he gave the most substantial and munificent proofs of the strength of the attachments of his childhood."* During his residence in Edinburgh, he was for a time in Mrs. Grant's family. "He always," to use the words of a near relative, "entertained for her the deepest veneration and affection, and left her by his will a legacy of five thousand dollars."†

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* "Memoir of John Lowell, Jr.," by Mr. Everett.

† We quote these words from a note, with which we were favored in answer to an inquiry on the subject. Circumstances, which have come to our knowledge since this sheet was in print, render it proper to mention, that no communications respecting Miss Lowell's friendship for Mrs Grant have been furnished us by her surviving relatives. Their very great delicacy has, as we have learned, prevented any more explicit notice of the subject, than what appears, from being given in Mrs. Grant's posthumous "Memoir and Correspondence." But we have related nothing which is not well known to many persons in the society about us; or which, with a very slight clew, may not be gathered from Mrs. Grant's published writings. The copies of Mrs. Grant's letters to Miss Lowell were obligingly put into our hands by a friend, not a relative, of the latter, without any restriction upon such use as we have made of them; so also were copies of Miss Lowell's letters to Mrs. Grant. All that we have related, or that could be re-

In 1810, Mrs. Grant removed to Edinburgh, which con tinued to be her residence during the remainder of her life In 1811, she published her "Essays on the Superstition of the Highlands of Scotland, with Translations from th Gaelic." The book is full of enthusiasm for the characte of the Highlanders, among whom she had so long resided and this enthusiasm was evidently a principal motive to it composition. In her last letter to Miss Lowell, (not receive till after that lady's death,) she speaks, in reference to thi intended publication, of the great reluctance which she ha always felt to undergo the ordeal of the press. "I shal submit to it once more," she adds, "because I have som things to tell the public that few know so well as myself because few have attended to them so much." "The sub ject," she writes in a letter to Miss C. M. Fanshawe "affords much latitude for excursion, which you may believ I have not used sparingly."

The book contains facts worth preservation, and narrative well told, which are entertaining and curious. But the gen eral speculations concerning the character of the Highland ers are not of equal value. The liberty of excursion ha been used freely, and the work is not well digested. Th author says, in one of a series of letters annexed to it "The great desideratum with me, in thought, word, an deed, is method." Her talents, indeed, did not lie in writ ing for the public. For this she wanted literary training; sh wanted the requisite habits of mind, and especially the pow er of regarding herself as an individual personally unknown addressing readers personally unknown to herself. He strong good sense, her correct taste, her warm and disinter ested feelings, her imagination, and her power of describin clearly and truly scenes and characters, appear to advantag only when she is pouring out her mind to her private friends The public was probably never more out of the view of on who was so much before it. Though, if she had thought a all on the subject, she must have known that the letter which form the collection just published might very probabl appear after her death, they exhibit no traces of such thought having dwelt upon her mind. She says, in a very long unpublished letter now lying before us: "I see what

lated, is highly honorable to both parties; and perhaps Miss Lowell's nam should no longer be considered by any of her friends as too sacred for th praise of a stranger.

have written is all marked with the vehemence of strong emotion, carrying me rapidly along and producing endless repetition and inaccuracy. If I had time I would write it over again ; but that is impossible ; therefore you must spell and guess, and be very indulgent." That her literary education was irregular and defective may appear from what has been already mentioned. In a letter to Miss C. M. Fanshawe, (dated 1st April, 1809,) she says :

"I am delighted with the pleasantry of your observations upon my defective orthography, — which can be the less excused, as it is a thing to be learned merely by a common degree of observation. But do you know that the first unshackled letter of my very own diction that I wrote in my life was that which begins the series of my printed correspondence; — this I have beside me, written in the most childish and unformed hand imaginable. I was taught to write, when a girl, in America, by a soldier in my father's regiment, who began life in the character of a gentleman, but, being an incorrigible sot, retained nothing but a fine hand to distinguish him from his fellows when he was chosen my teacher ; — this tutor of mine visited the black hole so often, that I got copies, — perhaps twenty, — at long intervals; when he was removed into another regiment. I was thus deprived of all instruction of this and of almost every other kind ; but then it was intended to send me to a convent in Canada, where officers' daughters got some sort of superficial education. This was deferred from year to year, and then dropped, because we thought of coming home, where I was to learn every thing ; but, by that time, I was grown very tall, very awkward, and so sensitive that a look disconcerted me, and I went to no school except that where dancing was taught, which I very soon left from the same miserable conscious awkwardness." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. i. pp. 210, 211.

Her letters, in the posthumous collection of them, may not seem fully to justify the remarks which have been made. But these letters have been, as we doubt not, subjected to that revision, which it is the duty of an editor to apply to the posthumous works of a friend. They have been improved by omissions and condensation. We infer this not merely from the difference in the mode of writing observable between them and her former printed works, but likewise from a comparison of them with the series of unpublished letters lying before us, extending from 1809 to 1821 ; and more particularly from comparing one which is published

(To a Friend in America, May 22, 1816) with a manuscript copy of it. While, therefore, Mrs. Grant's posthumous letters give, as there can be no question, a faithful view of her intellect and heart, they do not exactly represent her style of writing.

At Edinburgh, Mrs. Grant was early associated with that brilliant literary society which then cast its splendor over the city. "Mr. Henry Mackenzie," she says, "is one of our nearest neighbours." "Walter Scott and the formidable Jeffrey have both called on me, not by any means as a scribbling female, but on account of links formed by mutual friends." Her "Letters from the Mountains" had to overcome the disadvantage, that she introduced us to persons in whom we had before felt no interest, and with whom she often made us but very imperfectly acquainted. The last collection of her letters is full of descriptions, anecdotes, and passages, relating to individuals of whom every one has heard; and, in bringing them before us, she writes with great vivacity, and evident marks of truth. Her good sense and her right and kind feelings are everywhere apparent.

In a letter written very shortly after fixing her residence in Edinburgh, she says:

"Conversation in this Northern Athens is easy, animated, and, indeed, full of spirit and intelligence. Yet, though the feast of reason abounds, there is not so much of the flow of soul. . . . . There are syllogisms and epigrams, and now and then pointed and brilliant sentences, and observations and reflections both acute and profound, but neither the heart nor imagination are much concerned. In those enlightened circles, there is much intelligence, and a degree of metaphysical subtilty in argument and disquisition, but little playfulness and less heart. People are too well bred, too well informed, and too well amused by the passing scene, to seek those resources in their imaginations, or to be hurried by those feelings, which occupy and delight the simple children of nature. By simplicity I do not mean ignorance, but being unspotted by the world. At the same time, I am greatly amused by these parties, and find them incomparably superior to the dull unvaried gossip of a country town; for here there is no detraction, and little personality." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. I. pp. 256, 257.

The assertion may seem strange, but we cannot help doubting whether such highly intellectual society is well adapted to discipline the higher powers of intellect, to strengthen the noblest principles, or to call forth the more

generous affections. When the ambition to excel in such society takes strong hold of the mind, every thing is referred to a worldly standard. The lover of display in conversation must accommodate himself to the comprehensions and tastes of his audience. The laugh at generous sentiment, or natural feeling, or disinterested endeavour, will often be better relished than sympathy with it. A sarcasm is more piquant than approbation. All those feelings that relate to the higher interests of man, all those virtues which the world considers as humble, though God does not, all the more difficult virtues, that have their origin in the hard sufferings of life, all those high efforts in the cause of humanity, which demand sacrifices from him who would serve his fellow-men, or may cause him to exhort others to make sacrifices, are to be kept out of view, as affording no topics of entertainment. The mention of them with any earnest and heart-felt praise would be almost as strange as if it occurred in the correspondence of Horace Walpole. Truth is far more likely to be sacrificed to wit, or to be lost sight of in the ardor of debate, than to secure a victory by the gladiatorial skill of accomplished conversers. A side may be taken, and maintained with the subtilty and eloquence of an accomplished advocate; but a subject will hardly be discussed with the wisdom of a philosopher. That conversational intercourse is, we imagine, more agreeable to an unperverted taste, and more improving, in which there is greater repose; in which more of the natural character appears, and thoughts and feelings flow forth unstudied and without effort; which rises to high or falls to humble subjects, as occasion varies; which takes a wider view of the realities of life, and keeps our sympathies alive to all that should interest them; and in which truth is sought for in companionship, and not in a combat with others. In such society as she has described, it was scarcely to be expected that Mrs. Grant's worth, and especially her intellectual powers, should be estimated at their true value. It somewhat resembled "the broad unnatural light" into which Thalaba entered,

> "That made the rose's blush of beauty pale,
> And dimmed the rich geranium's purple blaze";

and the wild flowers, however beautiful, which alone Mrs. Grant had yet collected and bound together, were not likely to attract particular notice and praise.

Yet the excellence of her character, and her widely

spread celebrity, secured her respect and kindness. Jeffrey became her friend; and, in 1811, published a review of her writings. She relates in one of her letters, that, before its publication, he put it into her hands, expressing an opinion that he could "depend on her magnanimity"; and saying, that, as a reviewer, he considered himself "as entering the temple of truth and bound to say what he thought." The review is considerate, and was meant to be obliging; but at the same time contains passages that would have given offence to one whose self-love was very sensitive. It produced, however, no ill-will on the part of Mrs. Grant. She tells her correspondent, in the letter in which it is mentioned, that Mr. Jeffrey, being about to journey into the Highlands, came to ask her for letters to her Highland friends. The only little trait of sub-acid feeling in Mrs. Grant breaks out on the occasion of this journey, in one of those touches of wit which are common in her letters: "He came back perfectly delighted. I expected that, from the mere habit of carping, he would have criticized the mountains unmercifully."

There is not much to object to the fairness of Jeffrey's criticism, so far as it goes; but perhaps there is some ground to complain of omission. It may illustrate the remarks before made in reference to the literary society of Edinburgh, that the reviewer does not bring into view what seems to us the peculiar characteristic of the "Letters from the Mountains," on which their essential value depends. Whatever may be their literary deficiencies, they are a true picture of life, as life is to all but the highest and lowest classes in such an artificial state of society as exists in England. They exhibit its joys, its sorrows, its changes, and its diversities of character,—the realities, and not the outward show, of man's being in this world,—with such a constant, unaffected expression of the correct feelings and principles of the writer, as may make them, especially to the young, a very interesting and instructive moral lesson. We do not know any other series of letters of a similar kind. After a quotation from one of her letters, the review concludes thus:

"This, to be sure, is not exactly the style of Madame du Deffand; and yet there are very many people who will like it quite as well. And even those who would be most scandalized at the comparison must confess, that it indicates a far loftier, a far purer, and a far happier character, than that of the witty lady with whose it may be contrasted."—*Edinburgh Review*, Vol. XVIII., p. 510.

A book which exhibits such a character must be of more than common value; and should any one prefer the letters of Madame du Deffand to those of Mrs. Grant, he might lay himself open to the suspicion of resembling in his taste the French lady who did not like innocent pleasures. But even in those qualities of mind by which Madame du Deffand was distinguished, we doubt whether Mrs. Grant was naturally her inferior. We may find many things in her letters as quaintly and as wisely said as the following, of which we will venture to alter the construction a little, without any change of the essential expression. She is exhorting a young female friend to serious reflection.

"It is, too, a melancholy truth, very little thought of during the triumph of youth and beauty, that young women are the sole material of which old women are made."*

Horace Walpole has written few sentences with more point than a passage, in which Mrs. Grant says, speaking of one of Scott's novels, the "Fortunes of Nigel":

"I had a letter informing me that in England it is accounted a failure. Honest John Bull has not seen such a failure on his side of the Tweed since Shakspeare's time."

The Baron de Grimm never told a story better, or a story better worth telling, than two which Mrs. Grant has related in connection; one of a young man, very "handsome and fashionable," whom she did not know, who pressed across a room, seized her hand, and kissed it, "thirty years and upwards," she says, "after anybody had thought of kissing my hand," and expressed to her the feelings, which her poem, "The Highlanders," had awakened in him. The stranger she afterwards found was Colonel D'Este, son of the Duke of Sussex by his marriage with Lady Augusta Murray. She goes on:

"I must not omit an anecdote, better than my own, about kissing hands. A young lady from England, very ambitious of distinction, and thinking the outrageous admiration of genius was nearly as good as the possession of it, was presented to Sir Walter Scott, and had very nearly gone through the regular forms of swooning sensibility on the occasion. Being afterwards intro-

* The passage, as written by Mrs. Grant, stands thus: "There is a melancholy truth, too, very little thought of during the triumph of youth and beauty; it is the consideration of young women's being the sole material of which old women are made."

duced to Mr. Henry Mackenzie, she bore it better, but kissed his hand with admiring veneration. It is worth telling for the sake of Mr. Scott's comment. He said, 'Did you ever hear the like of that English lass, to faint at the sight of a cripple clerk of session, and kiss the dry, withered hand of an old tax-gatherer?'* — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. II. pp. 163, 164.

But the limits to which we ought to confine ourselves prevent us from quoting any more such characteristic specimens of the last collection of her letters. We wish to produce one of a very different kind. In addition to the very brief remarks which we have already made on those letters, we would only observe, that no more entertaining and instructive contribution toward literary history has for a long time been given to the public.

Beside the accident that has been before mentioned, which produced permanent lameness, and the grant of a pension of a hundred pounds in the year 1826, no important events varied Mrs. Grant's life or circumstances during the interval of twenty-eight years between her removal to Edinburgh and her death in 1838, in the eighty-fourth year of her age, — except from the affliction which continually followed her, the loss of her children. She has recorded in her correspondence during the interval the deaths of four daughters, and of her son, Duncan. The manner in which she has spoken of them may "teach more"

"Than high philosophy can preach."

It would be doing great injustice to her character not to bring into view the strength and elevation of mind with which she bore her sorrows, and the deep religious faith with which she regarded them as the dispensations of the God of mercy. We might quote much, but we shall confine ourselves to some extracts from a letter written after the death of her daughter, Anne, to a friend, (Mrs. Rucker,) with whom another daughter, Mary, was then residing. It begins thus:

"Be comforted, my dear friends, — I speak to you and Mary, — she is not dead but sleepeth, — she is most assuredly entered into that blessed rest for which her pure and humble soul

* Mr. Mackenzie held the office of Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland.

was so well prepared. Do not mourn for one who was not like the children of this world, and whose faith was made perfect through suffering, — long and bitter suffering. Of that I did not tell either of you when it would not avail; it would have made you most unhappy, and would not have saved her a single pang. My dear Mrs. Rucker, be thankful that you were the object of such fond and faithful love, as few in this world have to give, to such a spotless mind and purified soul as this that has now soared to its proper sphere. At six o'clock yesterday evening, or a little after it, she fell sweetly asleep; and though wasted to a shadow — even that shadow looks in death serenely beautiful — her forehead and eyebrows are finer than any thing I ever saw. What a heavenly treasure she has been to me! Whatever vexed or harassed me, I always found a balm from her lips and a cordial in her eyes to soothe and cheer me; her last words were a fervid expression of the unequalled affection she bore me. You well know that I saw this cloud impending last spring, and labored to make up my mind to the deepest wound that could be inflicted on it; yet when it came nearer I could not endure to look at it, and fed myself with vain hopes. . . . . He who made her all pure and lovely as she was knew what was best for her, and after indulging her in more of innocent happiness than falls to the lot of most people in a long life, he has, through this fiery trial, brought her home safely to himself. — Good is the will of the Lord!

. . . . . .

"Do not, my dear friends, mourn for the freed spirit that exults in its release from a painful prison. Thank God for me, that gave me a child whose presence was a blessing, and whose memory will hover round me like a vision of bliss, till, through the merits of my Saviour, I shall know as I am known. Could I forget her with a wish, I would not part with the dear image for this world's treasure: she indeed never gave her mother grief, but when she died, never intentionally offended, never hurt me with a cold look. My sun is fast declining, I have not many years to mourn. But why mourn for this blessed spirit! O, do not mourn, my dear friends: consecrate her memory; think cheerfully, speak easily of her. Adieu, dear friends, adieu." — *Memoir and Correspondence*, Vol. I. pp. 53–55.

No one can wish us to clothe in words the feelings with which every heart must be affected by this funeral hymn, so touching, so solemn, and so holy.

Here we conclude. We have succeeded but ill in these imperfect notices of Mrs. Grant, if we have not given the



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22

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ART. VI.—1. *Leçon sur la Statique Chimique des Etres Organisés, Professée par* M. DUMAS, *pour la Clôture de son Cours à l'Ecole de Médecine.* Paris: Fortier, Masson, & Co. 1841. 8vo. pp. 48.

2. *The Chemical and Physiological Balance of Organic Nature; an Essay.* By J. DUMAS and J. B. BOUSSINGAULT, Members of the Institute of France. [An English Translation of the Third French Edition.] London: H. Bailliere. 1844. 12mo. pp. 156.

3. *Lectures on the Applications of Chemistry and Geology to Agriculture.* By JAMES F. W. JOHNSTON, F. R. S., etc. Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons. 8vo. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 12mo.

4. *A Treatise on the Forces which produce the Organization of Plants; with an Appendix, containing several Memoirs on Capillary Attraction, Electricity, and the Chemical Action of Light.* By JOHN WILLIAM DRAPER, M. D., Professor of Chemistry in the University of New York. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1844. 4to. pp. 216.

We need not inform our readers, that the subjects with which these works are occupied have recently excited much attention and interest. Few strictly scientific treatises have been so generally read in this country as Professor Liebig's

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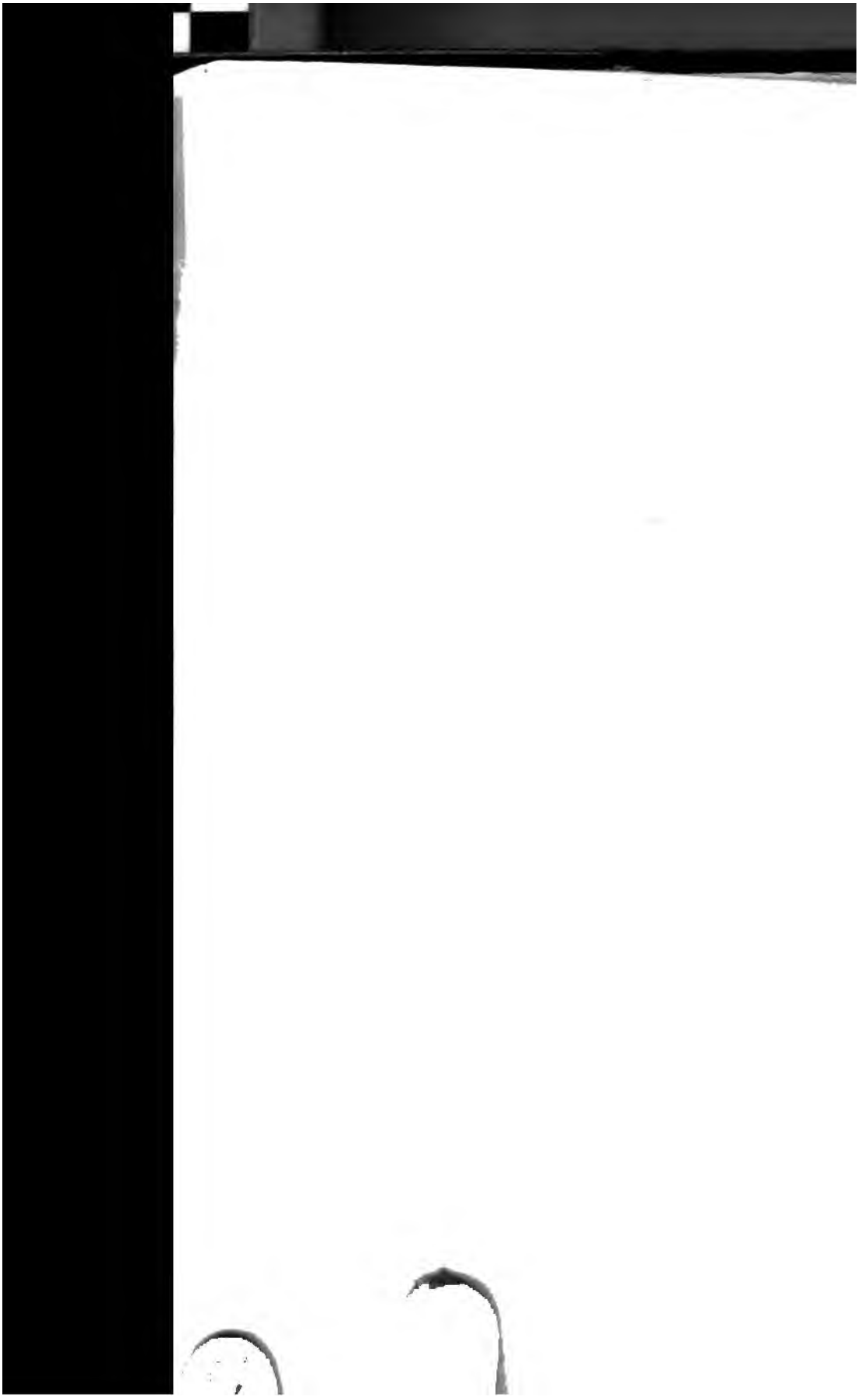
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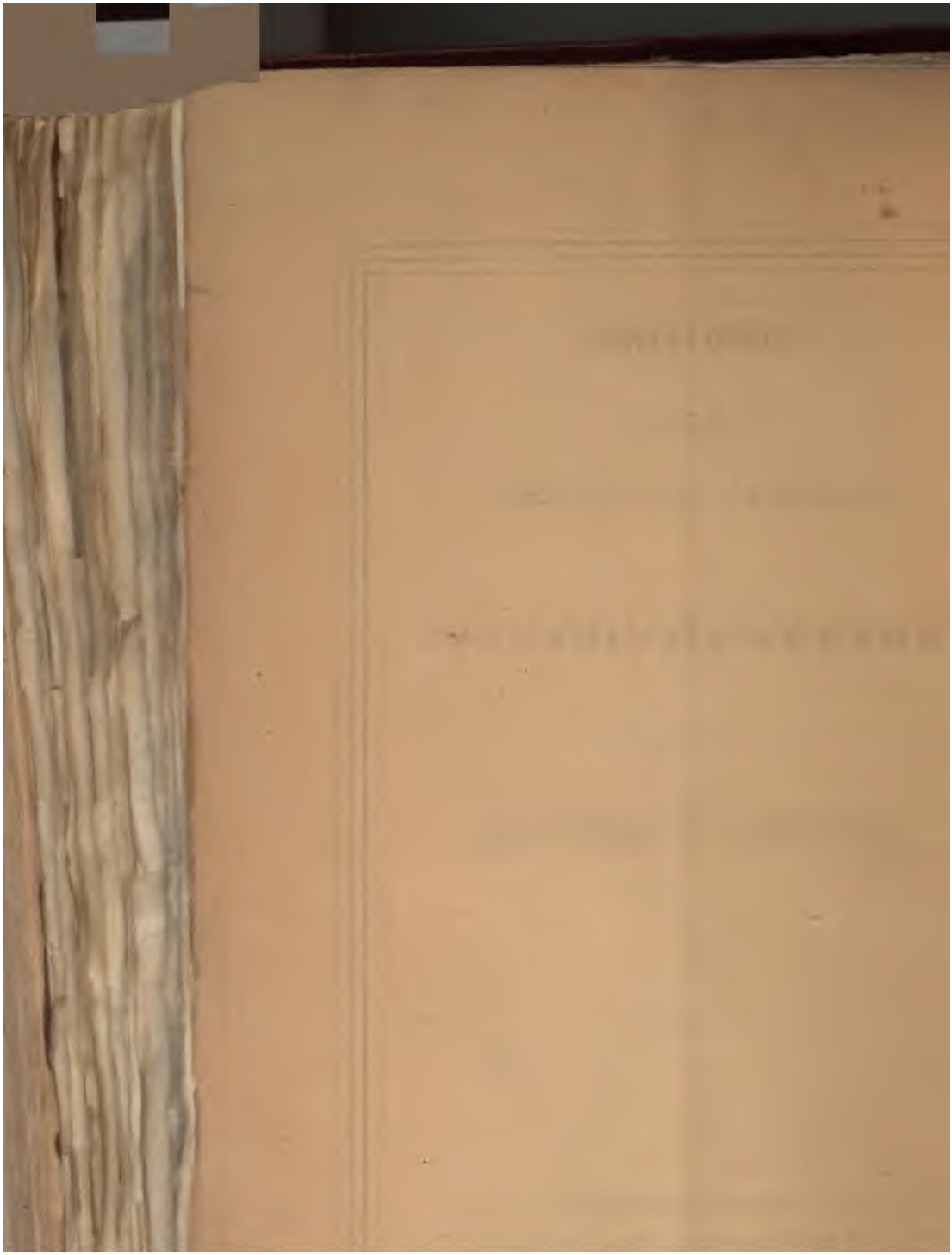
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from him.* Referring to the end of the second century, he states, that "This age" — he does not here say "the Church" — "labored zealously and simultaneously to represent Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as the only authentic biographers of Christ, as if this had not been done before; and an earnest effort was now first made to suppress the other gospels, which in earlier times had been abundantly in use." According to him, these labors and efforts soon attained success. In the time of Origen, "our four Gospels had manifestly triumphed over those before in use, in all the principal divisions of the Christian world; though, from the want of any account of the conflict, we are unable to explain how their success was obtained."

All this is sufficiently in accordance with what he had said before. But after a single sentence, in which he merely quotes Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Irenæus as vouchers for the general reception and extensive spread of the Gospels, he thus proceeds: —

"The period immediately before the controversies respecting the heresy of the Montanists, and the time of keeping Easter (which commenced shortly after the middle of the second century), that is to say, the interval between the years 150 and 175, appears to be the fittest that can be assigned for the silent introduction of this unanimity of opinion respecting those gospels which merited a preference above others; provided any cause can be pointed out, which might facilitate such a decision. And such a cause existed. The other gospels either did not bear the name of any author, or the individual names of their authors were not specified. On the contrary, our four Gospels were ascribed, two of them to Apostles, Matthew and John, and two to

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apostolic men, worthy of all credit. Who, therefore, would not prefer these to all others? This circumstance, and the simplicity of their contents, recommended them generally; and so forcibly and distinctly, that, without any consultation or agreement, men were led to give them the preference. In the peaceable times of the Church, before a spirit of contradiction had been excited by polemical bitterness, they were thus silently, and in effect generally, preferred. Afterwards, distinguished writers of the Church, each in his own way, defended the choice which had already been made."

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procure their reception about the end of the second or the beginning of the third century. On the contrary, the last year assigned for the period during which they were brought into common use is the year 175;—which preceded by about ten years the birth of Origen, during whose time, according to Eichhorn's first statement, they finally triumphed.

We have here an example of the looseness and incoherence of thought which are found in the works of many modern German theologians. Objects are so indistinctly presented, and under such changeable forms, the light is so thrown here and there, that the eye is dazzled and perplexed by the uncertain show and glimmer. The only advantages attending this mode of writing are, that if the reader be dissatisfied with one opinion, he may have the choice of another; and that the author, if driven from one assertion, may take refuge upon another, which he has equally maintained.

But it may be said, that this self-contradiction of Eichhorn should not be insisted upon; that it is a mere oversight, an hallucination. It was not, however, a temporary hallucination. Several years after the appearance of what I have just quoted, that is in 1827, the last year of his life, he published the fourth and fifth volumes of his Introduction to the New Testament; and in the fourth volume, without retracting, or referring to, the main positions of his hypothesis, he contradicts them as explicitly as in the passage that has been quoted. He is treating of the collection of the books of the New Testament into two volumes, as he supposes, one containing the Gospels and the other the Epistles.

The heretic Marcion, he says, began to spread his opinions in the West between the years 140 and 150. His gospel, which he carried with him, "was strange" to the

Christians in that part of the world, being different from those in use. "The West had been long in possession of separate histories of Christ. Mark and Luke appear, indeed, to have written theirs for Italy, and those of Matthew and John had each, perhaps, been brought by Christians, on their travels, from the countries for which they were originally designed." "Before the controversy with Marcion, there are traces enough of the existence of the four Gospels separately, but not as collected into one volume." "This collection was probably formed in the commencement of those controversies." "Experience had sufficiently taught the orthodox Church, in the first half of the second century, how necessary it was, on account of the controversies with the heretics, to define the writings which should be regarded as sources of Christianity, and not to leave this to the judgment and choice of individuals." But the selection of these books was not made "through any formal decision of the Church by means of its most distinguished teachers; for this could not have been done privately; but through a silent general agreement, during a period of perfect quiet in the Church, when, men's minds not being excited by other causes, none were inclined to set themselves against the reception of any writing that was strange to them; for, without opposition, and in perfect silence, a series of writings, regarded as the authentic records of Christianity, was unanimously received throughout the Christian world in the East and in the West." *

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* Einleitung, IV. 22–31.

hypothesis, however, struck its roots deep in the theology of Germany; and many offsets have sprung up from it. There is no other in which propositions tending to weaken men's faith in the genuineness of the Gospels are so elaborately and plausibly embodied. It has essentially affected the speculations of a large class of theologians, particularly among his countrymen. All the doubts and objections on historical grounds, by which the evidence of the genuineness of the Gospels has of late years been assailed, have been connected with it. The question at issue is a very important one. Putting aside all religious considerations, the genuineness of the Gospels is a subject of far more curiosity and interest than that of any work of classical antiquity. But what should we think of a critic who should assail the genuineness of any ancient classical work with such unsteady and inconsistent assertions?

But something still remains to be said. One is placed in an extraordinary position who is arguing against the hypothesis of Eichhorn as invalidating the proof of the genuineness of the Gospels; for Eichhorn himself asserts and defends their genuineness. In the second volume of his Introduction to the New Testament, he reasons at length to prove the genuineness of the Gospel of John (pp. 223–254). I have already* quoted from his first volume one passage, in which he maintains the genuineness of all the four Gospels. But his fourth volume presents other passages more remarkable. In the flux and reflux of opinions on which his hypothesis was borne up, the flow was in his first volume, and the ebb in his fourth.

In the latter volume he treats of the formation of the canon of the New Testament. The early Christians, ac-

* See before, p. 86.

cording to him, proceeded on the principle of admitting into it no book which was not the work of an Apostle, or of a scholar and companion of the Apostles (p. 42). He gives us to understand, that as regards most of the books which compose it, "criticism, in the perfection to which it has been brought in our age, allies itself to the tradition of the Church, and confirms its judgment upon their genuineness as apostolic writings" (p. 67). After enumerating and remarking upon several which he rejects, he says: — "The remaining writings" — including the Gospels — "which the Church has received into the canon of the New Testament appear, after the strictest critical examination, as genuine documents of the Christian religion" (p. 70). The title of the next section is, "Confirmation of the Tradition concerning the Antiquity of the Writings of the New Testament; or Proofs of their Genuineness." These proofs are derived from their correspondence with the history of the times, and with the character and circumstances of those to whom they are ascribed. And the next section (p. 89) begins with the declaration, that "as the earliest age of Christianity handed down genuine writings to succeeding Christians, so they, during the subsequent period, have preserved these writings uncorrupted."

All this being asserted, it may seem, at first glance, as if it were useless to pursue the argument. One can prove nothing more than what his opponent, if he so regard him, has already contended for. But the genuineness of the Gospels is a subject of too serious importance for its proof to be suffered to rest on the self-contradictions of a German theologian.

Indeed, Eichhorn's assertions of the genuineness of the Gospels have made no impression on the theologians of his





country, or on those who have derived their opinions from them. De Wette (in the second edition of his Commentary on the Gospels, published in 1839) says, that in regard to "the historical criticism of the Gospels" (the meaning of which indefinite words we may deduce from their connection as being "the inquiry how far the history in the Gospels is true or false"), "if it be not too early for the present state of theology, it is too early for the state of my own views and convictions, to solve the whole problem of the criticism of the evangelical history; and I would not fall into the error, committed by most of the opposers of Dr. Strauss, of putting forward over-hasty and immature thoughts." The inquiry into the truth of the evangelic history is primarily connected, he says, with the results of criticism concerning the sources of this history, that is, with the inquiry into the origin and genuineness of the Gospels. But in respect to the first three Gospels, he has attained only to what he calls the *negative* conclusion, that they are founded on tradition; and with regard to the Gospel of John he has come to no confident decision. "It would be tolerably easy," he says, "to solve critically the problem of the Gospel-history, if the apostolical genuineness and credibility of that Gospel might be presupposed." This was done, he says, by the most free-minded critics before Strauss. But De Wette finds himself unable to answer satisfactorily the objections of Strauss and Weisse; he finds no sure foothold on the Gospel of John; and "I must, therefore," he says, "reserve many things which depend on the question of its genuineness till I am better informed hereafter."*

This appears in a work printed when the author was

* Exegetische Handbuch in d. N. T. Vol. I. P. iii. pp. 222, 223.

about sixty years old, after he had spent a great part of his life in the exposition of his opinions concerning religion and Christianity. It is part of a dissertation which concludes a commentary on the Gospels. If one is struck by the modesty of the writer in being unwilling at his age to put forward over-hasty and immature opinions respecting their credibility, yet, on the other hand, there may seem some want of consideration in undertaking to expound the character of our religion without any fixed opinions concerning the truth or falsehood of its history.

His younger contemporary, Strauss, to whom De Wette refers, has settled convictions on the subject. He is satisfied that the Gospels are neither genuine nor credible. He holds, at the same time, determinately, a correct opinion respecting the importance of the question of their genuineness. "Certainly," he says, "it would be of decisive weight to establish the credibility of the Bible-history, were it proved that it was written by eyewitnesses, or even by contemporaries in the neighbourhood of the events." *

But such, according to him, was not the case; and he proceeds to discuss the historical evidence for the genuineness of the Gospels in a dissertation occupying about ten pages (pp. 73–84) of the more than fifteen hundred which compose his work. Its depth is not disproportioned to its length; for nothing more superficial was ever put forward by a writer of any note as the examination of an important subject. But he considers it unnecessary to attend to the historical evidence, except so far as to show, that it does not interfere with the main purpose of his book, which is to prove directly from the contents of the Gospels that they are neither credible nor genuine.

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* Leben Jesu, i. e. Life of Jesus. 3d Ed. Vol. I. p. 73.

In pursuing this purpose, his argument rests on two fundamental propositions. One of these he states explicitly, the other he does not. The first is, that "the chain of finite causes is indissoluble, and that a miracle is impossible."* As the whole history recorded in the Gospels is miraculous in its essential character, and full of accounts of particular miracles, this principle alone is sufficient to determine the thoroughly fabulous character of those writings. But Strauss, not content with this clear demonstration, has filled a great part of his work with criticisms founded on his second principle, which may be thus explained: If two or more books purport to be written by individuals who were personally, or by direct information, well acquainted with a series of transactions, and if, in professing to relate the same events, the authors of those books differ irreconcilably in some one or more of the circumstances attending them, we may conclude that the events never occurred, that the narratives are fabulous (or "mythical"), and the books not genuine. He labors, therefore, to make it apparent that there are such contradictions in the Gospels.

If a critic begin with putting out of sight the fact, that probably there were never two original histories of any considerable length, concerning the same series of events, which accorded with each other in all their details, his success in discovering objections to the credibility of books subjected to his examination may be proportioned to the rashness of his judgment, to the narrowness of his views, and to his deficiency in the learning and sagacity which might enable him to discern the explanation of what he does not at once understand, to perceive that seeming

* Leben Jesu, I. 86. Comp. pp. 94–98, 116.

are often not real, or not important, difficulties, and to come to the conviction, that a narrative may be essentially true in which there are errors. Excepting the objections of Strauss to every thing miraculous in the history of our Lord, the striking out of which, as he himself recognizes, leaves but a scanty and uncertain basis of true history, the criticisms in his work are directed rather against the doctrine that the Gospels were written by miraculous inspiration, than against their credibility. But his volumes are not without their value. They present a collection, from various authors, of difficulties in the history contained in the Gospels, to which their expositor should particularly direct his attention, and by the examination of which new light may be thrown on their narrative.

When Strauss's book appeared, German theology was becoming sear and yellow. But, though infidelity was predominant, the new form of infidelity brought forward by him caused a shaking among the dry branches, and reviews, pamphlets, and books were showered upon him, like autumnal leaves. I do not know whether in any of these answers there is a solid confutation of his two fundamental principles.

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In what precedes in this note, I have brought together statements which stood apart in the original edition of this volume, and connected them with some additional remarks. Upon resuming in the text the argument for the genuineness of the Gospels, we shall — except in relation to the proof afforded by Justin Martyr — have little occasion or opportunity to advert to the errors, or opposite opinions, of other writers. The facts to be stated in evidence are undisputed; and of the reasoning upon those facts every one can judge for himself.

But in order fully to disembarrass the subject on which we are about to enter from all objections except those made to the testimony of Justin, there are two topics which it may be well to take notice of here; especially as the argument respecting them lies within a narrow compass, and in treating the first of them we must recur to the conclusion which it has been my purpose to establish in the preceding part of this work.

The first is the testimony of Papias to the authorship of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. I have already adverted to it,* and shall produce it at length hereafter. Schleiermacher,† Strauss, and others have attempted to invalidate it.

As there is no question that Papias, *in the first quarter of the second century*, ascribed certain books concerning the history of Christ to Matthew and Mark, the only ground to be taken by those who would reject his testimony, and that, consequently, which has been taken, is, to contend that they were not the same books as the Gospels ascribed to Matthew and Mark *in the last quarter of that century*.

But, as I have said, the argument on this subject lies within a narrow compass. The proposition asserted must involve one of two conjectures. One supposition may be, that the books mentioned by Papias as the works of Matthew and Mark served respectively as the bases of the Gospels shortly after ascribed to them, and were converted into those Gospels by a gradual change. But, if the rea-

* See before, pp. 59, 60.

† In a dissertation "Upon the Testimony of Papias concerning our first two Gospels," first published (in 1832) in the journal entitled "Theologische Studien und Kritiken," and reprinted in the second volume of his Works.

soning in the preceding part of this work be valid, it has been made evident, that the Gospels were not formed by any such process, but remain the same works as they were originally composed.

The other supposition may be, that the Gospels ascribed to Matthew and Mark were originally different books from those spoken of by Papias; that they were spurious books (for if it be admitted that they were genuine, all discussion is at an end); but that, in the interval between the first and last quarter of the second century, they were quietly received throughout the Christian community, displacing the genuine works of Matthew and Mark, and causing them to be utterly neglected and forgotten. It is impossible to offer any confutation of this supposition which may render it more incredible than it appears at first view.

It has also been common to slight the testimony of Papias, on the ground that Eusebius says he was a man of very small mind. Referring to this, Schleiermacher says, "I have always been sorry when I have found this testimony dealt with in a certain disparaging manner";—though he himself endeavours to set it aside by the supposition, that Papias spoke of other books than the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. The opinion of Eusebius may have been correct; but those who have adduced it as having any bearing on the case in hand must have neglected to attend to the fact, that weakness of intellect does not enable one to speak of books as existing which are not in existence.

The other topic to which I have referred is the attestation which Luke himself furnishes to the genuineness of his Gospel in the beginning of his Acts of the Apostles.

That the author of the Acts of the Apostles was the author of the Gospel is admitted. But it is contended that he was not Luke, the companion of St. Paul.





That he was the companion of the Apostle cannot, it is said, be proved from the frequent use of the pronoun "we" in the Acts of the Apostles. That book, it is said, is a compilation, and its author, wherever this pronoun occurs, made use of a narrative written by Timothy; and retained the pronoun as he found it in that document. There is a difficulty in this solution, arising from the first five verses of the twentieth chapter of the Acts, where Timothy appears to be separated from those who are designated by the pronoun "we." But this difficulty is easily got over. The circumstance, that the author of the Acts did retain the pronoun "we," in using the document of Timothy, presents another difficulty. Ulrich, the most elaborate defender of the hypothesis in question,* acknowledges that no solution of it fully satisfies him; but he considers it "a difficulty of subordinate importance," "a problem which may be left for the exercise of ingenuity."

The positive arguments brought in proof of this supposition I might endeavour to state and answer, if I could persuade myself that I should have any intelligent reader who would not regard me as wasting his time and my own.

"It is difficult," says Strauss,† "to reconcile many of the narratives concerning Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, some vacillating, some marvellous, and others contradictory to what is found in the genuine Epistles of that Apostle, with the supposition that the author of the book was his companion." But Strauss, not insisting upon the supposition, that the book was not written by a companion of Paul, suggests that, if it were so, the author wrote both the

* In two dissertations in the "Theologische Studien und Kritiken"; in No. 2, for 1837, and No. 4, for 1840.

† Leben Jesu, I. 79, 80.

Acts and his Gospel when he was no longer under the influence of the Apostle, and readily received the marvels with which tradition furnished him.

De Wette says, that it is with him "a settled conviction that the Gospel" — that is, the Gospel of Luke, or the Gospel ascribed to Luke — "was written after the destruction of Jerusalem."* I will give at length all the arguments which he adduces for this conviction.† "This Gospel," he says, "was composed at a pretty late period; for it supposes the existence of many preceding works on the history of Christ (ch. i. 1.), and the destruction of Jerusalem." His proof that it supposes that the latter event had taken place is this: "Luke," in the prophecy contained in his twenty-first chapter, "disconnects the coming of Christ from the destruction of Jerusalem, and indicates this more distinctly than Matthew." In making the first remark, he may seem to have overlooked the twenty-seventh verse of the chapter referred to: *Then will they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* But De Wette has not only an explanation for this passage (p. 228 of his Commentary on Matthew); he has still another argument: "Luke also assigns an earlier time to the persecution of the Christians than Matthew."

Matthew, after giving the prediction of our Lord respecting the wars and rumors of wars which were coming, represents him as saying (ch. xxiv. 9): "*Then*" — meaning not "afterwards," but "during that time" — "will they deliver you up to affliction, and put you to death." After a similar prediction of wars and commotions in Luke, follow

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* Kurze Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte, i. e. Brief Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles, p. 6. 2d Ed.

† In his Introduction to the N. T. (in German), p. 184. 2d Ed.

the words (ch. xxi. 12): "But *before* all these things they will lay hands on you and persecute you." This is an example of the discrepancies which have been sought out in the Gospels. But its bearing on the question when Luke wrote his Gospel is not apparent.

We may be led, therefore, to turn for explanation to De Wette's Commentary * on the Gospels; and there, on the passage in Luke, is the following note: — "That Luke, in contradiction to Matthew, assigns an earlier date for the persecutions of the Christians, namely, *before* those wars and tumults, betrays the fact that, at the time when he wrote, those, indeed, but not these, had taken place." This is all which he remarks. The reference of "those" and "these" in the last clause is equally ambiguous in the original, as in a translation. But whichever reference may be adopted, it is obvious that the passage is equally without coherent meaning, upon the supposition that Luke wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem. Nor can I conjecture what meaning the writer thought himself to be expressing, or what argument he supposed himself to have found to prove that Luke's Gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

One cannot help feeling some reluctance to reporting such opinions and arguments as I have remarked upon in this note, a reluctance arising partly from their intrinsic character, and partly from an apprehension that there may be readers who will doubt whether they are reported correctly. Should such a doubt arise, it may be removed by a wider acquaintance with a large class of German theologians and critics, who speculate and reason in a similar manner.

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* Kurze Erklärung d. Evv. d. Lukas u. Marcus.



The books I have quoted with [illegible] and other [illegible] ent generation has passed away, [illegible] observed upon will soon [illegible] the student of the history of [illegible] case, the present note was [illegible] sion. But it seemed due to [illegible] he was a defender of the [illegible] to show that he had very fully [illegible] ceis, that they were introduced [illegible] authority of the Church [illegible] tury. It was desirable, likewise, [illegible] proof that the Gospels have [illegible] authors, to give some account of [illegible] been taken to it, especially as it [illegible] words. And this note, in connection with [illegible] this work, may afford a general view of [illegible] the whole controversy against the genuineness of the Gospels. — *Note to 2d Edition*, 1846.



The books I have quoted will not be read after the present generation has passed away; and the opinions I have observed upon will soon cease to attract notice, except from the student of the history of theology. Such being the case, the present note may appear an unnecessary digression. But it seemed due to Eichhorn to state the fact, that he was a defender of the genuineness of the Gospels; and to show that he had very fully contradicted his own hypothesis, that they were introduced into common use by the authority of the Church about the end of the second century. It was desirable, likewise, before entering on the proof that the Gospels have been ascribed to their true authors, to give some account of the exceptions which have been taken to it, especially as it could be done in so few words. And this note, in connection with the First Part of this work, may afford a general view of the present state of the whole controversy against the genuineness of the Gospels. — *Note to 2d Edition*, 1846.

## CHAPTER IV.*

### CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE DIRECT HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF THE GENUINENESS OF THE GOSPELS.

SUCH as we have seen is the direct historical evidence of the genuineness of the Gospels. The confirmation it receives from the manner in which they were regarded by the earlier heretical sects is still to be considered, and, likewise, all that proof to be derived from the Gospels themselves, which makes it evident, that they could have been written only by individuals bearing the character, and placed in the circumstances, of those to whom they are ascribed. For the present, we confine our attention to the direct historical evidence alone.

IN regard to this, the nature of the case is such, that no evidence of the same character, or of the same weight, can be produced for the genuineness of any other ancient work, which was not, like them, received as an undisputed book of the Christian Scriptures. It is the testimony of a great, widely-spread, and intel-

* Following p. 248 of the first edition.

ligent community to a fact about which they had full means of information, and in which they had the deepest interest. It is their testimony to the genuineness of books, the reception of which as authentic would change the whole complexion of their lives; and might, not improbably, put at hazard life itself, or all that they had before considered as rendering life desirable. It is the testimony of Gentiles to their belief of the genuineness and truth of books derived from Jews, — books regarded with strong dislike by a great majority of that nation; three of which were not in common use among those few Jews who, like them, were disciples of Christ; and all of which were so stamped throughout with a Jewish character, as to be likely, at first view, strongly to offend their prejudices and tastes.

But the peculiar nature and value of this testimony may be laid out of consideration. The fact alone, that the four Gospels were all received as genuine books, entitled to the highest credit, by the whole community of catholic Christians, dispersed throughout the world, admits of no explanation, except that they had always been so regarded. We have begun by reasoning from their reception during the last

quarter of the second century; and their reception at that time affords, as we have seen, decisive proof of the estimation in which they must have been held during the whole preceding interval from their first appearance. But, though we may entitle this proof decisive, yet, like all other probable reasoning, it admits of confirmation; and we have seen the confirmation afforded by the evidence of Justin Martyr, who gives direct proof, that the authority of the Gospels was established among Christians before the middle of the second century. I say before the middle of the second century, — for though this was the precise time when he wrote his first Apology, yet his testimony must be considered as relating to a state of things with which he had been previously conversant. We have next remarked the express and particular testimony of Papias to the genuineness of two of the Gospels, and to the estimation in which they were held by Christians. Then, tracing the stream of evidence back to its very source, we have seen Luke's own attestation to the genuineness of his Gospel. And in connection with this, and with the testimony of Papias, we have attended to the fact, that the acknowledged genuineness of any one of the Gospels must have presented an insuperable barrier to the

reception of any spurious gospel as a work of like authority. The testimony to the genuineness of any one of the Gospels is virtually a testimony to the genuineness of all; and the testimony to their genuineness is a testimony to their reception by all catholic Christians wherever they had become known.

But, in regard to our present argument, it is unimportant what period an objector may fix upon for the general reception of the Gospels as genuine. The later the period assigned for this event, the more obviously incredible does it become that it should have taken place, on the supposition that the Gospels were not received from the beginning in the character which they afterwards bore. The longer the Christian community had existed without a knowledge of the Gospels, or without a belief in their genuineness, the more difficult must it have been to produce this belief, and to cause them to be recognized as books of the highest value and authority. Let us suppose that they were not so regarded till the last quarter of the second century. Their general recognition at that period becomes a most remarkable phenomenon. Some very effective cause or causes must be assigned for it, sufficient to explain how four spurious books, not before known, or known

only to be rejected, should suddenly have obtained universal acceptance throughout the Christian world, as containing the truths fundamental to a Christian's belief. No trace of any causes capable of producing this result can be discovered or imagined. In the nature of things, it is impossible that such causes should have existed. The Christians of that age professed to receive the Gospels as genuine and authentic, on the ground that they had always been so regarded. The truth of this fact is the only explanation which can be given of the universal respect in which they were then held.

It appears, therefore, that the evidence of the genuineness of the Gospels is of a very different character from what we are able to produce for the genuineness of any ancient classical work. Very few readers, I presume, could at once recollect and state the grounds on which we believe the Epistles to Atticus to have been written by Cicero, or the History of the Peloponnesian War by Thucydides. But should any writer undertake to impugn the genuineness of these, or of many other ancient works that might be named, in the manner in which attempts have been made to weaken the historical argument for the genuineness of the Gospels,

he would hardly succeed even in gaining a discreditable notoriety.

But there are objections derived from the Gospels themselves, which are relied upon as doing away the whole force of the historical argument. It is urged, that the contents of one Gospel are irreconcilable with those of another, and, therefore, that the Gospels could not be the works of well-informed narrators. By the opponents of Christianity, the errors of theologians are commonly confounded with the truths of our religion; and, so far as the objection just mentioned rests on any tenable grounds, it bears, not against the authenticity and genuineness of the Gospels, but against the doctrine that they were written by miraculous inspiration. It would be an extraordinary fact, if these books presented on their face decisive objections to their own credibility which had been overlooked for eighteen centuries by intelligent Christians engaged in their study. To any one, indeed, who is capable of a just apprehension of the proof of the genuineness of the Gospels, afforded by their intrinsic character, nothing can appear more idle than such an attempt to prove, from their contents, that they

could not have been written by the authors to whom they are ascribed.

But there is another objection drawn from the essential character of the Gospels, which is, in fact, the root, and furnishes the sap and strength, of all others which have been urged against them. They contain the history of a miraculous dispensation; and a miracle, it is asserted, is impossible.

This objection, if it can be maintained, is final, not merely in regard to the truth of the Gospels, and the truth of Christianity, but in regard to the truth of all religion.

The assertion, that a miracle is impossible, and, consequently, that such a miraculous intervention of the Deity as Christianity supposes is impossible, must rest for support solely on the doctrine, that there is no God; but that the universe has been formed and is controlled by physical powers essential to its elementary principles, which, always remaining the same, must always produce their effects uniformly according to their necessary laws of action. This being so, a miracle, which would be a change in these necessary laws, is, of course, impossible.

But when we refer the powers operating throughout the universe to one Being, as the

source of all power, and ascribe to this Being intelligence, design, and benevolence, that is, when we recognize the truth, that there is a God, it becomes the extravagance of presumptuous folly to pretend, that we may be assured, that this Being can or will act in no other way than according to what we call the laws of nature; that he has no ability, or can have no purpose, to manifest himself to his creatures by any display of his power and goodness which they have not before witnessed, or do not ordinarily witness.

The assertion, therefore, that a miracle is impossible, can be maintained by no coherent reasoning, which does not assume for its basis, that all religion is false; that its fundamental doctrine, that there is a God, is untrue. The controversy respecting it is not between Christianity and atheism; it is between religion, in any form in which it may appear, and atheism.

One may, indeed, give the name of God to the physical powers operating throughout the universe, considered collectively, or to some abstraction, as the moral law of the universe, for example, or to some conception still more unsubstantial and unintelligible, and thus contend that he does not deny the existence of God. But there is but one view which an





honest man can take of the deception which in this and other similar cases has been attempted through a gross abuse of words, by which their true meaning is razed out, and a false meaning forced upon them. In contending with irreligion, we have a right to demand that we shall not be mocked with the language of religion.

But the fact has been overlooked, that, supposing the proposition to be admitted, that a miraculous intervention of the Deity is impossible, it would have no bearing on our immediate subject. No inference could be drawn from it to show that the Gospels were not written by those to whom they are ascribed.

The first disciples of our Lord, the first preachers of his religion, whether their account was true or false, taught that he was a messenger from God, whose authority was continually attested by displays of divine power, superseding the common laws of nature. They represented Christianity only under the character of a dispensation wholly miraculous. It has come down to us bearing this character from the first accounts we have of its annunciation, — from the time when St. Paul wrote those Epistles, the genuineness of which cannot be questioned The fact that Christianity is a miraculous dis-

pensation was the basis of his whole teaching, and equally of the teaching of the other Apostles. It cannot be pretended, that any indication is to be found of its having been presented to men under another character. The effects which followed its preaching are such as could have resulted only from such a conception of it. The hypothesis, therefore,—for such an hypothesis has actually been put forward,*—that this was not the original character of Christianity,—that its first preachers did not announce it as a miraculous dispensation, but that some time during the lives of the Apostles, or immediately after, it assumed this character,—can be regarded only as one of the most extraordinary of those exhibitions of human folly which have lately been given to the world as speculations concerning our religion. There is no doubt, that the Apostles and their companions represented Christ as a messenger from God, whose divine authority was attested throughout his ministry by miracles. It can, therefore, be no objection to the genuineness of the Gospels, that such is the representation to be found in them. Whether true or false, it is the only representation that

* By Strauss, in his Leben Jesu (Life of Jesus).

was to be expected in histories of Jesus given by Apostles and their companions.

The Gospels, then, contain that view of Christianity which was presented by its first preachers. We have in these books that solemn attestation which was borne by them, and was confirmed by circumstances that exclude all doubt of its truth, to facts in the ministry and character of Christ which evince his divine mission. And to this nothing is objected but a speculation, which supposes that all religion must be false.

In regard to men's belief in Christianity, and their apprehension of its character, the present is an age of transition. We are leaving behind us the errors and superstitions of former days, with all their deplorable consequences, — the domination of a priesthood, tyranny over reason, persecution, false conceptions of morality by which its sanctions were often wholly perverted, and that disgust toward Christianity which the deformed image bearing its name, and set up for idol-worship, was so fitted to produce. But, through a revulsion of feeling, occasioned by this state of things, many of the clergy, particularly in England, — one is reluctant to say

many priests, though this is a title which they readily assume, — have turned about, and are travelling back into the dark region of implicit faith, Jesuitical morality, and religious formalities, absurdities, and crimes. On the other hand, there is a multitude of speculatists, who, in the abandonment of religious error, have abandoned religion itself, and whose only substitute for it, if they have any, is an unsubstantial spectre which they have decorated with its titles. Meanwhile, very many enlightened men, who have been repelled from the study of Christianity by the imbecility or folly of those who have assumed to be its privileged expositors and defenders, regard it, at best, only with a certain degree of respect, as being, perhaps, a noble system, if properly understood, and one the belief of which, even under the forms that it has been made to assume, is, at all events, useful to the community: — *Magnifica quidem res et salutaris, si modo est ulla.*

In order that we may pass from this state of things to a better, it is necessary that the intellect of men should be awakened and brought to exercise itself on the most important subject that can be presented to its examination. The result would be a rational and firm faith in Christianity, with all the consequences that must

flow from such a faith. The convictions which rest on reason are of very different efficacy from the impressions produced through prejudice, imagination, or passion. The latter may lead to great evil; the former can produce only good. There is a sense of reality attending the convictions of reason, which makes it impossible that they should not penetrate into the character. Let any one, in the best exercise of his understanding, be persuaded that the history of Jesus Christ is true, that the miracle of his mission from God, which belongs to the order of events lying beyond the sphere of this world, and concerning the whole of man's existence, is as real as those facts which take place in this world, conformably to the narrow circle of its laws with which we are familiar, and he has become intellectually, and can hardly fail to become morally, a new being. In recognizing that fact, he recognizes his relation to God, or rather, if I may so speak, God's relation to him. Life assumes another character. It is not a short period of existence in which we are to confine our views and desires to what may be attained within its limits. It is a state of preparation for a life to come, which will continue into an infinity where the eye of the mind is wholly incapable of following its course. Viewed





in the broad light which thus pours in upon us, their false coloring disappears from the objects of passion, and we perceive that there is nothing permanently good, but what tends to the moral and intellectual progress of the soul, and nothing to be dreaded as essentially evil, but what tends to impede it.

# NOTE*

## *On Epiphanius's Account of the Gospel used by the Ebionites.*

THE passages that have been preserved of the Gospel of the Hebrews, so called, in which some one or more of its copies varied from the Gospel of Matthew, may be found in the Codex Apocryphus N. T. of Fabricius, or in Jones on the Canon.

But from the passages that have been regarded as variations or additions in the Gospel of the Hebrews, should, I believe, be excepted all those given on the authority of Epiphanius. His account of the contents of the gospel used by the Ebionites is, I am persuaded, wholly undeserving of credit. The opposite opinion has been commonly held; and the Gospel of the Ebionites has been spoken of as a distinct form of the Gospel of the Hebrews. Not having sufficiently attended to the subject, I wrote, in the first edition of this work, on the presumption of the truth of this opinion. But the grounds on which it is to be rejected may appear from what follows.

Epiphanius, in a passage following one already quoted from him above (in which he asserts that the Ebionites "used the Gospel of Matthew alone in the original Hebrew"), says (Opp. I. 137), that the Gospel of Matthew used by the Ebionites was "not complete, but corrupted and curtailed," and proceeds to give the following example. In this Gospel, he says, it is written: —

"*There was a certain man, Jesus by name, about thirty years old, who made choice of us. And coming to Capernaum, he entered the house of Simon, surnamed Peter; and, opening his mouth, he said, As I was passing along the lake of Tiberias, I chose John and James, sons of Zebedee, and Simon, and Andrew, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, — and thee, Matthew, I called, who wert sitting at the custom-house, and thou didst follow me. You, then, I will should be twelve Apostles to testify to Israel.*

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* Inserted in the place of note †, p. xlix of the first Edition.

"*And John was baptizing. And the Pharisees went to him and were baptized, and all Jerusalem. And John had a garment of camel's-hair, and a leathern girdle round his loins; and his food*, this gospel says, *was wild honey, the taste of which was that of the manna, like a sweet cake with oil.*"

The last words, "*like a sweet cake with oil*," are a description of the taste of the manna, borrowed, inaccurately, from the renderings of the Septuagint, Exodus xvi. 31, and Numbers xi. 8.

This passage is characterized by such weakness and folly as to show, that it never could have made part of a book regarded as the authentic history of our Lord by any body of Christians, or by any body of men possessed of common intelligence. It exhibits those characteristics so strongly throughout, that it scarcely deserves to be particularly remarked, that eight individuals are called twelve Apostles; or that such care is taken to inform the reader concerning the taste of wild honey, by comparing it to that of the manna.

But should we reason on the supposition, that the passage was found in some history of Christ, it is evident, that, such being the case, it must have formed its commencement. It is not easy to perceive how this fact can be made clearer than it is at first view, or what doubt may arise concerning it which it is necessary to remove. But the absurdity of supposing the passage to occupy any other place may, perhaps, be brought more home to the mind by imagining it to be inserted, somewhere after the beginning, in any one of the four Gospels, or in any other gospel that may be conceived of.

But Epiphanius, immediately after quoting this passage, goes on to say (p. 138), "Their gospel" (the Gospel of the Ebionites) "begins thus:—

"*In the days of Herod, king of Judea, John came baptizing the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan; being said to be of the family of Aaron the priest, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth; and all went to him.*"

Epiphanius thus assigns two beginnings to his pretended gospel. No credit can be given to the account of a writer who sets out with a false statement in the form of so portentous a blunder. The two passages which he pretends to quote could not have coëxisted in the same book.

In the passage last given, John is said to have baptized in the reign of Herod, king of Judea, that is of Herod the Great (so called); and these words are just afterwards alleged by Epiphanius again. But

this Herod died more than thirty years before John's appearance. We cannot believe that so gross an error had a permanent place in a gospel received as a work of authority by Jewish Christians.

After what has been said, it is not necessary to bring into view all the other reasons which make it evident that the account given by Epiphanius of the Gospel of the Ebionites is a mere fabrication. But there are two or three other points which it may be worth while to attend to.

This Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, "corrupted and curtailed," was, as he affirms (p. 138), the same gospel which was used by the Carpocratians. But the Carpocratians, of whom I have elsewhere spoken (Part III. Ch. iv.), were a Gentile sect, widely differing from the Ebionites in their doctrines. Whatever conceptions they may have borrowed from Christianity, they certainly did not make use of a Hebrew Gospel. Any gospel which they were acquainted with must have been in Greek.

But, though there is no question that the Ebionites used a Hebrew gospel, yet the remarks of Epiphanius on one passage which he professes to quote from it (p. 146), imply the extraordinary oversight of regarding it as a Greek gospel. The Ebionites, he says, refrained from animal food. But our Saviour, he objects, partook of the Passover. And he pretends (p. 146), that, to meet this difficulty, the Ebionites had altered the words of Jesus, *I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you*, into an interrogation, *Have I earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you?* This change would be effected in Greek by prefixing the Greek particle μή to the sentence; and Epiphanius asks, "Is not their fraud to be easily detected from what follows, which proclaims that the *mu* (the letter μ) and the *eta* (η) have been added?"

It appears, then, that he was commenting on a Greek text, real or imaginary. The words of our Lord which he quotes are not in Matthew, but in Luke (xxii. 15); and, to reduce all the statements of Epiphanius into one coherent charge, it would amount to this, that the Ebionites introduced a passage in Greek from the Gospel of Luke into the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, for the sake of corrupting the reading, though they could gain no advantage by it.

I will remark on one other passage, the only one remaining of those which Epiphanius professes to quote from the Gospel of the Ebionites, excepting an account of our Lord's baptism, which I have omitted to notice, because it is not particularly important in regard to our present purpose.

By the fathers before and after Epiphanius, the Jewish Christians, generally, are represented as distinguished by their attachment to the Jewish Law, — Origen alone remarking, that some of them "had relinquished their ancient customs under the pretext of expositions and allegories." The same character is also given of them by Epiphanius. "The Nazarenes," he says, after his fashion (p. 122), "are in all things Jews, and nothing else." "The Ebionites," he says (p. 125), "hold the doctrine of the Nazarenes." "Ebion adhered to the Jewish Law as to keeping the Sabbath, and circumcision, and all other things which are observed by Jews and Samaritans." (p. 126.) The Ebionites, he affirms, calumniated St. Paul, because "he wrote against circumcision, and the Sabbath, and the Law." (p. 140.)

Yet on the very page on which this last assertion stands, he abruptly introduces the declaration, that in the Gospel of the Ebionites Christ was represented as saying: —

"*I have come to abolish sacrifices, and unless ye cease from offering sacrifices, wrath will not cease to be upon you.*"

He makes this astonishing statement without any attempt to reconcile it with the well-known character of the Ebionites, or with his own account of them.

Epiphanius could not have afforded plainer indications than he has done, that the account given by him of his pretended Gospel of the Ebionites is utterly undeserving of credit. What may have suggested to him the fabrication, or what may have been his motive for putting it forth, must be a mere matter of conjecture. But it is evident that the account is to be thrown out of consideration in an inquiry respecting the use of the Hebrew original of Matthew by the Jewish Christians; and that no argument on any subject is valid which rests on the supposition of its truth. — *Note to 2d Edition*, 1846.

In the second edition, in connection with the mention of supposed interpolations in the Gospel of Matthew, I have referred to the words ascribed to our Lord in Matthew xii. 40; and have given the following note upon them, the place of which would be on p. lxix, of the first edition.

## NOTE

### *On Matthew* xii. 40.

I do not speak of the passage in the text, because I do not believe it to be an interpolation. I give the words in brackets, with those preceding: —

"A wicked and apostate race would have a sign; but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the Prophet. [For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.]"

The words of our Lord are thus reported by Luke, Ch. xi. 29, 30: —

"This is a wicked race. It would have a sign; but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. For such a sign as Jonah was to the Ninevites will the Son of Man be to this generation."

If we regard what is given by Luke as a correct report of what was said by Jesus, we may suppose that the explanation of the sign of Jonah, by a comparison of his being three days and three nights in the belly of a fish with our Lord's being three days and three nights in a tomb, which is found in Matthew but not in Luke, was introduced into our Lord's discourse during the time that it was preserved by oral tradition. His own brief words leaving his meaning undefined, they were understood by some as referring to the extraordinary marvel related in the story of Jonah; and, being so understood, this explanation became connected with them. There seems to be no reason for supposing that it was inserted in Matthew's Gospel by any other than the Evangelist himself.

But it cannot readily be believed that our Lord would have represented his being three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as the only sign of his divine mission to be given to the Jews. This would have been admitting what they had just implied, that no sign of his divine mission had already been given them.

Nor, if we regard as fabulous the story that Jonah remained alive for three days and three nights in a fish by which he had been swallowed, is it credible that our Lord would have referred to a fiction of this sort in the manner represented; — especially, as it does not appear from the narrative concerning Jonah that the supposed miracle was any sign to the Ninevites, or was even known to them.

It may be added, that our Lord is made to say, that he would be three days and three nights in the tomb. He was, in fact, laid in the tomb on the night of Friday, probably late at night, and rose before the dawn of Sunday morning; — and no use of language can be produced which may justify the calling of such a period of time three days and three nights. Its being so called can, I think, be accounted for only by the loose manner in which the Jews were wont to accommodate together passages of the Old Testament, and events of which they regarded those passages as descriptive, prophetic, or typical. Of this it is not a remarkable example.

The meaning of the words of Jesus as reported by Luke, and also by Matthew, with the omission of those under consideration, may be thus explained: —

Jesus was surrounded by men full of bigotry, evil passions, and mortal hatred toward himself, — men who were resisting the strongest evidences of his divine mission, ascribing his miracles to the agency of Satan, and demanding in mockery some sign of his divine mission, some manifestation of God's power in attestation of it, as if the most striking attestations of it had not been already given. His view turned to that destruction of their nation which was impending over the Jews, as the punishment of their rejection of him. No sign, he says, will be given to this wicked and apostate race, no manifestation of God's power will be made to them which they will believe and feel to be such, except a prophet of destruction such as Jonah was to the Ninevites, whose warnings — to pursue the train of thought which was in the mind of our Lord — will be disregarded, and whose predictions of ruin will be accomplished.

Thus he immediately subjoins: — "The men of Nineveh will rise up before the judgment-seat with this race and condemn it; for they





reformed upon the preaching of Jonah; and lo! one greater than Jonah is here."

However fabulous may be the story of Jonah, there was nothing unsuitable to our Lord's character in thus using it. Speakers and writers of every age and country have recurred to well-known works of fiction as readily as to authentic history for analogies and exemplifications fitted to affect the imaginations of their hearers or readers. It would be folly to suppose, that, in doing so, they meant to vouch for the truth of the books which they have thus quoted. It is only in the reasonings of divines, that these facts have been overlooked, — in those reasonings in which our Lord and the writers of the New Testament have been considered as giving their authority for the truth and for the genuineness of all books referred to or quoted by them.

## LUKE, CHAPTER IX. VERSES 55, 56.*

When our Lord and his disciples were refused hospitality by the Samaritans of a certain village, which was an act of peculiar disrespect according to the notions of that age and country, James and John, in common, doubtless, with the other disciples, were indignant at such treatment. They recollected what, according to the Jewish history, had been the dealings of prophets of old with those who offended them; they were disposed on this as on other occasions to take the lead among the disciples, and, under the excitement of the moment, they addressed Jesus with the question, — "Master, shall we call down fire from heaven and destroy them? — as Elijah did.

"But he turned and rebuked them; [and said, Ye know not of what spirit ye are. For the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.] And they went to another village."

We can conceive of no words more appropriate to the occasion, more suitable to the character of our Lord, or better fitted to repress and correct the wrong feelings of his disciples. They conveyed a reproof full of instruction, expressed at once in the mildest and the most effectual form.

One who is not a critical student of the New Testament may therefore be surprised to learn, that these words were, probably, not in the Gospel of Luke as written by him. They are wanting in a large majority of the oldest and most important manuscripts.

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* Inserted between p. lxxvii. and p. lxxix. of the first edition.

The omission of a passage which was part of the original text of a work must be the result either of accident or of design. No accident can be supposed which would lead to the concurrent omission of a passage in many manuscripts, which, like those in the present case, were written independently of one another, that is, of which one was not copied from another. There is only one class of accidents of omission which admits of any particular explanation, such as may justify us in supposing the possibility that an accident of this class, affecting a particular passage, might occur in a few unconnected copies. The omissions referred to are those which proceed from the circumstance, that one clause ends with the same word or the same series of syllables as another following it, so that the eye of a transcriber may glance from the former to the latter ending, and omit the intervening words;—omissions in consequence of an *homoioteleuton* (that is, "like ending"), as they are technically called. But this cause of omission does not exist in the passage before us.

If, then, the words ascribed to Jesus originally made a part of Luke's Gospel, they must have been omitted by design; and this supposition has been resorted to. It has been suggested that they were struck out by catholic Christians, that the Marcionites might not use them in defence of their opinions.*

As I have elsewhere (in Part III. of this work) more fully explained, the Marcionites, in common with the other Gnostics, regarded Judaism as a very imperfect dispensation, with which Christianity in many respects stood in contrast; they conceived of it as proceeding not from the true God, but from an inferior god, who had fashioned this material world; and they believed that the Apostles gen-

* "Orthodoxi hæc videntur delevisse, ne Marcionitæ haberent quo se tuerentur."—Wetstein, ad locum.





erally, through their Jewish prejudices, did not fully comprehend the character of Christianity. In the passage before us, our Lord is represented as saying to two of the principal Apostles,—"Ye know not of what spirit ye are"; that is, as I doubt not that the words should be understood, "Ye know not the spirit of my religion"; and in his own conduct he presents the spirit of Christianity in contrast with what was conceived to be the spirit of Judaism, as exemplified in the story concerning Elijah.* The passage, therefore, is one which the Marcionites might naturally have thought to be very much to their purpose.

But we cannot thus account for its omission. Nor can we adopt any other supposition, which is designed to explain its absence from so many copies, on the ground of there being something obnoxious in its character.

There is no evidence, and no probability, that transcribers among catholic Christians were accustomed to omit passages through the influence of any theological prejudice, or because they might seem to them to present a difficulty, of whatever kind that might be. If such had been the fact, there must have been abundant evidence of it in the present state of the authorities for settling the text of the New Testament; but such evidence does not exist. Catholic Christians, to say nothing of their reverence for the Scriptures, were not so deficient in honesty and in good sense as to adopt or countenance such a course. In regard to the passage before us, every transcriber must have shrunk from thus dealing with the words of Jesus himself. Without doubt, likewise, the generality of those engaged in the transcription and sale of books pursued their business as a trade, and troubled themselves little about the bearing of particular passages.

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* The story is told in 2 Kings, Ch. i.

But should we admit that some few transcribers were so alarmed at the use which the Marcionites might make of the passage, that, though they could not expunge it from the copies of the Marcionites, they struck it out of their own, or that they were, for any other reason, so scandalized at the words of our Lord, that they resolved not to be concerned in preserving them, yet their misconduct could affect only the copies which they transcribed. If we suppose the omission to have been made after the controversy with the Marcionites had commenced, it could not have affected many thousands of copies already spread over the world, nor those copies which might be made by more trustworthy transcribers; nor could it have counteracted the constant tendency there would have been to fill up the gap which had been left, — the tendency among transcribers, of which I have before spoken, to insert and not to omit. We cannot, therefore, account for the absence of the passage from so many copies on the ground of intentional omission.

But it is further to be observed, that the Marcionites made no use of the words of our Lord, though apparently so much to their purpose. If they had done so, we should have evidence of the fact in the writings of their opponents, particularly of Tertullian. But nothing to that effect appears. This is the more remarkable, as Tertullian in his long work against Marcion twice notices the use which the Marcionites made of the narrative, by contrasting the conduct of Jesus and Elijah,* but refers to no appeal made by them to the words of Jesus. Had those words been generally recognized as genuine in the time of the earlier Marcionites, they could hardly have failed to use them.

* Advers. Marcion. Lib. IV. c. 23. p. 438. Ib. c. 29. p. 446.

In discussing the question, whether a passage omitted in certain manuscripts should or should not be considered as a part of the original text, it has not been uncommon to array on one side the authorities which recognize it as genuine, and on the other side those which do not. The intrinsic value of one class of authorities, considered in reference to their general character, is then weighed against that of the other class, and the passage is judged to be genuine or not, according as either class preponderates;—except, indeed, that a zeal for defending the Received Text often causes the critic to lay a heavy hand upon the scale in which are placed the authorities for retaining it. But this mode of reasoning is wholly fallacious. If a passage be genuine, we may reasonably expect to find it, not in a majority of the copies of the work to which it belongs, but in all the copies, except so far as in particular cases a satisfactory reason may be assigned for its omission. If there be any copy in which it is not found, this is a fact to be accounted for. An interpolation may be extant in a majority of copies. It may have been originally inserted inconsiderately or fraudulently. It may by mistake have been taken from the margin into the text,—a mistake of so very frequent occurrence, that I am obliged often to refer to it.* Having been once inserted, its spread

* A marginal note has crept into the text, says Porson in his Letters to Travis (pp. 149, 150), "not merely in hundreds or thousands, but in millions of places. *Naturâ*, says Daillé, *ita comparatum est, ut auctorum probatorum libros plerique omnes amplos quam breves malint; verentes scilicet, ne quid sibi desit, quod auctoris vel sit vel esse dicatur.* To the same purpose Bengelius, *Non facile pro superfluo aliquid hodie habent complures docti viri* (he might have added, *omnesque indocti*), *eâdemque mente plerique quondam librarii fuere.* From this known propensity of transcribers to turn every thing into text which they found written in the margin of their MSS. or between the lines, so many interpolations have proceeded, that at present the surest canon of criticism is, *Præferatur lectio brevior.*"

from one copy to many is easily explained by the uncritical habits of transcribers, and their disposition to retain whatever they found given as a part of the text before them. The noted passage interpolated in the Jewish Antiquities of Josephus, in which mention is made of Jesus, is not only quoted by a series of Christian fathers from Eusebius downward, but is extant at the present day in all the manuscripts of that work. It appears, therefore, that the genuineness of a passage is not established by its being found in a majority of the most important copies of the work of which it may be supposed to be a part. To satisfy the conditions of proof required, it should be found in all; except (as I have said) a sufficient and probable cause can be assigned for its absence.

These are general principles of criticism, to be kept in view in regard to the passage before us, and others which we are about to consider. The present passage, indeed, is *not* found in a majority of the most important manuscripts, but it is found in a large majority of the manuscripts of Luke's Gospel, taken indiscriminately, and in many of the versions.

Its omission in the copies in which it is not found cannot, as we have seen, be accounted for as having been caused either by accident or by design. We must conclude, therefore, that it did not make a part of the original text of Luke's Gospel.

But, on the other hand, the words carry with them strong intrinsic proof that they were spoken by Jesus. Nor can we imagine any reason why, if not uttered by him, they should have been invented and ascribed to him.

In this state of the case, the only solution of the appearances that present themselves seems to be, that the words ascribed to our Lord were spoken by him, that they were preserved in the memories of those who heard him, and



communicated by them to others, and that, not having been recorded by Luke, they were first written in the margin, and then introduced into the text of his Gospel.

But the appearances are such, that, this general explanation being given, we must enter further into particulars. The Cambridge manuscript and some other authorities omit only the last words ascribed to our Lord, and preserve the first, namely, "*Ye know not of what spirit ye are.*" And some manuscripts, including the Vatican and the Codex Stephani $\eta$, which omit all our Lord's words, omit also the words, "*As Elijah did.*" It may seem, therefore, that the account of the words of our Lord and his disciples was not introduced in a complete form at once; but that the text owes its present state to marginal additions made at three different times; first, the words, "*As Elijah did*," being written down, as these are wanting in the smallest number of manuscripts, then those first spoken by our Lord, and then his remaining words.



In the first edition, on page cvi, I have quoted the verses, Mark ii. 4 and Luke v. 19. In the second edition, I have altered the rendering of these verses, so that they stand as given below, accompanied with two explanatory notes; the first referring to an expression of Luke, and the second to the accounts of both the Evangelists.

## *Mark* ii. 4. *Luke* v. 19.

Mark ii. 4. And not being able to get near him on account of the crowd, they removed a part of the awning over where he was, and, breaking through, let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.†

Luke v. 19. And not finding any way to carry him in, on account of the crowd, they got on the house-top, and lowered him down from the roof,* with his bed, into the midst, before Jesus.†

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* Διὰ τῶν κεράμων, — which is equivalent to the Latin *per tegulas*, and does not, any more than the Latin words, signify "through the tiling," or "through the roof." To render verbally, we should say "by way of the roof," but the meaning is here more intelligibly expressed by saying "from the roof." — See Wetstein's N. T. Vol. I. pp. 558, 559, and Kypke's Observationes Sacræ, I. 230. See also, in relation both to this and the following note, Shaw's Travels, pp. 273 - 280.

† To understand the accounts of Mark and Luke, we must attend to the following considerations.

Jesus was in the house in which he usually resided when in Capernaum, and which was probably owned by Peter. This, doubtless, was a small house, — the habitation of one who was not wealthy.

The more common notion has been, that Jesus was in an upper

chamber of this house; and that the roof over the chamber in which he was, was broken through. But this, I think, is an error.

There are two objections to this conception of the circumstances of the case, either of which seems decisive. One is, that when such a crowd was pressing to hear him, our Lord would not have retired to an upper chamber of a small house that he might there address those only who could gain admission. The other is, that the breaking through of a roof over his head, with the inconvenience and disorder that it must have occasioned, would have been an act of such gross indecorum as is not to be imagined.

In essential conformity, then, with an explanation given by Dr. Shaw (in his Travels, as before referred to), we are, I suppose, to conceive of Jesus as in the inner court of the house, the place where, in the houses of Judea and the neighbouring countries, a large company was always received. The bearers of the paralytic, not being able to make their way to him through the crowd, ascended to the flat, terraced roof of the house, passing up stairs, which rose either from the porch or just by the entrance of the court, or perhaps passing over the roof of a neighbouring house; and from the roof where they were, they lowered the sick man down into the court.

There is no difficulty in thus understanding the account of Luke. Mark's account requires a little further explanation. In this account, the word στέγη, rendered "roof" in the Common Version, denotes, I conceive, conformably to common uses of it, the awning stretched over the court, as an awning often was. This the bearers of the sick man partially removed; but having done so, the parapet, which, according to the usual mode of building, ran along the roof over the court, probably about breast-high, as Shaw says it is at the present day, presented an obstacle to their purpose. Over the parapet they would not undertake to lift their burden; for this could not have been done with convenience or safety. They accordingly made an opening through it, which Mark expresses by the word ἐξορύξαντες, "breaking through," without mentioning what was broken through.

This is one instance, among many, of the imperfect style of narration found in the Evangelists. They did not advert to the fact, that what was clear to their own minds might not be equally clear to the minds of readers living many centuries after they wrote. They thought only of those who were familiar with the scenes and circumstances to which their narratives related.

HAVING altered above the rendering given in the first edition, which was conformed to the more common conception of the passage, it seemed proper to explain my reasons for doing so. Otherwise, I should have been unwilling to withdraw attention from the main argument before us. — *Note to 2d Edition.*

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ERRATUM.

p. 43, note, for 'p. lxxvii,' read 'p. lxxviii.'





23

To Mr. George Ticknor

Letter on the rise and early progress of unitarianism in the U. S.

By Andrews Norton.

My Dear Sir: —

I regret that I have been prevented by ill-health from answering your letter before, and I fear that I must answer it now in a way equally unsatisfactory to you and to myself.

As you know, there had been from an early period, I cannot say how early, a resistance to the rigid Calvinism of our forefathers, and to their false conceptions of religion. The authority of their system was broken in upon by the publication of Roger Williams's "Bloody Tenent," in 1644. I cannot from memory trace the history of this resistance. Perhaps — I place no confidence in my recollections — the most important work against the *peculiar doctrines* of Calvinism, which subsequently appeared, was just a century later, — a work published in 1744, entitled, "Grace Defended," by Experience Mayhew, the Indian missionary, and the father of Dr. Jonathan Mayhew. But, from the middle of the last century, there was a considerable and increasing body, both of the clergy and the laity, who rejected with more or less explicitness the doctrines of Calvinism, and modified the doctrine of the Trinity into what has been called "high Arianism," that is, into the proper, ancient, Arian doctrine. The name Arminian soon began to be familiarly used to denote such heretics, often with some epithet of disrespect, as I recollect that my mother has told me that old Dr. Gay of Hingham was called by her grandfather, (Colonel Richmond,) who had no personal ill-will toward him, "a plaguy Arminian." The tendency to separation between the two parties had, indeed, commenced before the middle of the last century, and was increased by the preaching of Whitefield in this country, who arrived for the first time in 1740. His extravagancies and denunciations gave offence, and tended to weaken the credit of his doctrines. The College at Cambridge took the liberal side. The second Professor of Divinity, Dr. Wigglesworth, was not a Calvinist. I cannot speak with confidence, from my own examination, about the opinions of his father, the first Professor, though materials enough exist for ascertaining them, but I believe there is no doubt that he inclined to the Anti-Calvinistic side.

This controversy, as men did not reason in those days from their spiritual intuitions, implied learning, and a critical knowledge of the Scriptures, after the fashion of those times. These studies extended even to the laity, some of whom

were interested in settling their faith for themselves. One of the earliest books which I read relating to the exposition of the Scriptures, many years ago, when quite a young man, was a copy of the original edition of Taylor on the Romans, borrowed from the family of an old gentleman of Hingham, (Colonel John Thaxter, who died in 1802, at the age of eighty-one), which he had formerly recommended and lent to my father.

Besides the main controversy between "the Orthodox" and "liberal Christians," there were other controversies, which kept alive a spirit of inquiry, and attention to theological learning generally, and particularly to the critical study of the Scriptures; such as those respecting Episcopacy, and the doctrine of the final salvation of all men, in both of which Dr. Chauncy particularly distinguished himself.

But if my recollection serves me correctly, there was in the last twenty years of the last century a suspension of controversy between our two great religious parties, a lull in our theological world, broken only by the writings of Hopkins and his followers and opponents, which added nothing to the theological learning of our country. This condition of things was in a great measure produced by the state of public affairs in our own country and in Europe, which engrossed men's thoughts and feelings. Religious opinions were less clearly defined; clergymen, holding, as they conceived, opposite doctrines, did not in all cases feel bound to keep aloof from each other. This state of things continued into the present century; but the truce was soon broken.

One of the first symptoms of the renewed struggle was the appearance of the Panoplist, I think in 1804. In that publication I do not recollect anything marked by its learning or its power of general reasoning. It did nothing to promote theological science. But the flame which it was intended to kindle blazed forth on the election of Dr. Ware, who was a liberal Christian in the best sense of the words, and a good theological scholar, to the professorship of divinity in the College. This was in 1805. But the controversy which followed was not managed with extraordinary ability by the liberal party. Through the influence of many causes which rendered the fact natural and excusable, members of that party were not sufficiently explicit in the avowal of their opinions; there was a tendency among them to represent themselves as not essentially disagreeing with their opponents;

and in general, though the superiority of the liberal party in learning was then acknowledged, they wanted the learning necessary to give them assurance in their opinions, and to enable them fully and satisfactorily to explain and defend them. The feelings of resistance in the other party were very strong and active. They denounced their opponents as enemies of the Gospel, and excluded from the hope of salvation. This strong language, which may sound so strangely in our times, is fully supported by the controversial writings of that period. I may refer especially to the different Letters of Dr. Worcester to Mr. Channing, Dr. Worcester having come forward at a later date (in 1815) as a champion of the Orthodox party. The prestige of Orthodoxy continued very powerful, and there were many whose own opinions would have borne no severe test, who yet shrunk from any direct opposition to it. I cannot fix the precise date, but it was after 1805, that I was informed by a young minister, that, on his professing his disbelief of the Trinity, he was told by one of the most distinguished clergymen of Boston, and a most liberal-minded man, that he had better not publicly avow it.

It was in this state of things, in 1805, when he was not yet twenty-one years old, that Mr. Buckminster was ordained as pastor of the society in Brattle Street. In less than eight years, — eight years interrupted by constant ill-health, and by constant labors and avocations connected with his ministry, — he was taken from us. The blossoms and fruits of his mind — ripe fruits — appeared together. I have nothing to add to the opinions I expressed, immediately after his death, in the "General Repository," concerning the influence of his genius, his learning, his whole character, in promoting and giving an impulse to all good literature among us, and especially to the liberal and enlightened study of theology. These opinions were afterwards confirmed by the corresponding views presented in the excellent memoir of him, by his friend and mine, Mr. Thacher. This memoir, and the notices of him in the General Repository, (there were two,) are prefixed to the last edition of his Sermons.

Though I cannot do it without some personal reference to myself, I will go on to mention a few facts which throw light on the state of religious opinion and feeling, and theological learning, during the period of which I have spoken. In 1812,

I published, as editor, the first volume of the General Repository. I suppose I need have no hesitation in stating, what was then generally recognized, that in this work the tone of opposition to the prevailing doctrines of Orthodoxy was more explicit, decided, and fundamental than had been common among us. The first article in the volume, entitled "A Defence of Liberal Christianity," was written by myself. Mr. Buckminster expressed to me, on his own part, no dissatisfaction with its sentiments, but told me of a remark made on it by our common friend, Mr. Vaughan of Hallowell, the pupil and friend of Dr. Priestley, — that it reminded him of what the English Unitarians had been called, namely, "the Sect of the Imprudents." For one who should read it now with only a knowledge of the present state of religious opinion and feeling in our country, it might be difficult to discover why the writer should be thought to belong to the sect of the Imprudents. But, in 1809, Mr. Buckminster had said, in a letter to Mr. Belsham, (published in Williams's Life of Belsham,) "Do you wish to know anything of American Theology? I can only tell you, that, except in the small town of Boston and its vicinity, there cannot be collected, from a space of one hundred miles, six clergymen who have any conceptions of rational theology, and who would not shrink from the suspicion of antitrinitarianism in any shape."

But the publication of the General Repository soon failed for want of support. It was too bold for the proper prudence, or the worldly caution, or for the actual convictions, of a large portion of the liberal party. Mr. Channing, in a defence of those who were then among us beginning to be called Unitarians, in his "Letter to Mr. Thacher," published in 1815, said of it, "As to the General Repository, I never for a moment imagined that its editor was constituted or acknowledged as the organ of his brethren; and while its high literary merit has been allowed, I have heard some of its sentiments disapproved by a majority of those with whom I conversed." When, in 1819, I was elected Professor of Biblical Criticism, the President of the College, Dr. Kirkland, informed me that Mr. Channing, who was then a member of its Corporation, was willing to assign me the duties and the salary of the office, but objected to giving me the title of Professor on account of the injury it might be to the College to make so conspicuous its connection with one holding such opinions as mine.

Its decided character, however, was not the only obstacle to the success of the General Repository. It was overburdened with learning, or with what passed for learning among us, out of proportion to the amount of theological knowledge, or interest in such knowledge, which existed among its readers. I gave in it an account of the controversy between Dr. Priestley and Dr. Horsley, the fame of which had not then died out; and this was continued through several numbers. Dr. Kirkland, with his usual happiness in giving advice indirectly, told me that people said "I was writing what nobody but myself understood." Still an effort was made by its friends to promote its circulation. In 1813, a recommendation of it (unsolicited by me) was published as a circular, bearing the signatures of five of the most respectable laymen of Boston, — Samuel Eliot, Samuel Dexter, Dudley A. Tyng, Joseph Hall, and John Lowell. But it was not thought advisable that any clergyman should sign it.

The facts which I have stated, few as they are, may throw some light on the oppressive bigotry which prevailed among us during the life-time of Mr. Buckminster. I am tempted to add another proof. A passage comes to my recollection of a lecture which I delivered in the College Chapel, about the year 1816 (I cannot fix the precise date). I have looked it up in the manuscript, and find it to be to this effect: —

"'Whatever an ill man believes,' says Jeremy Taylor, 'if he therefore believes it because it serves his own ends, be his belief true or false, the man hath an heretical mind; for to serve his own ends, his mind is prepared to believe a lie. But a good man, that believes what, according to his light and the use of his moral industry, he thinks true, whether he hits upon the right or no, because he hath a mind desirous of truth, and prepared to believe every truth, is therefore acceptable to God; because nothing hindered him from it but what he could not help, — his misery and his weakness, — which being imperfections merely natural, which God never punishes, he stands fair for a blessing of his morality, which God always accepts.' This is admirable. — But it is melancholy to think, that we have so long been accustomed to nothing but what is bigoted, and narrow, and irrational on the subject of religion, that we feel delight in the expression of any generous or manly sentiment, though it be nothing but the most obvious truth. We are like those who have been so long confined within the walls of a prison, that they

are filled with emotion at being restored to the common light and air."

When we consider that it would be an absurdity too gross to be imagined, for one among us at the present day to deliver in a lecture the concluding remarks on the passage of Taylor, we may comprehend what a vast change has taken place since they were written.

I was some time since as much vexed as there was any occasion for being, (which, to say the truth, was very little,) by a passage in a note by Mr. W. H. Channing to the Preface to his Memoir of his uncle, in which he says, that, in a sketch which he had written "of the rise and progress of the Unitarian controversy," but forbore to publish, "the rightful position was assigned to the General Repository, as the advance-guard of Unitarianism proper." What he meant by the words "Unitarianism proper" I do not understand; nor do I conceive him to have had any distinct meaning in his own mind. No work, in opposition to what its writer regarded as prevailing errors concerning religion, could have less connection than the Repository with anything that may be called "Unitarianism proper," unless by this term be meant simply Antitrinitarianism, — a sense which, as appears from the connection in which it stands, could not reasonably be intended. The common use of the words "Unitarians" and "Unitarianism," to denote a sect and the opinions of that sect, was, I think, introduced among those who had before been called "Liberal Christians," by Mr. Channing, through his Letter to Mr. Thacher, published in 1815. The Orthodox had endeavoured to fix that name on Liberal Christians invidiously, for the purpose of confounding them with the English Unitarians of that time, and of making them responsible for all the speculations of members of that body. Mr. Channing, though recognizing it as an ambiguous term, and remonstrating against the use made of it by the Orthodox, and carefully defining that by Unitarianism he meant only Antitrinitarianism, yet adopted the appellation as the distinctive name of those in whose defence he was writing. In a note to this Letter, he explains that he regarded the name, Liberal Christians, as too assuming; "because the word *liberality* expresses the noblest qualities of the human mind." That name, however, had been familiarly applied by the Orthodox to their opponents, without any intention either of complimenting them or of sneering at them.

The name Unitarian gradually became prevalent among

us, and those by whom it was assumed combined into a sect. They thus quitted the high ground on which they had stood, or might have stood, in company with the good and wise, the philosophers of different ages and different denominations, — with such men as Erasmus, and Grotius, and Locke, and Le Clerc, who, according to their light, opposed the religious errors prevailing round them, and were "the liberal Christians" of their day. They exchanged this for a connection with the English Unitarians as they then existed; and notwithstanding the credit conferred on that sect by the eminent talents and great virtues of Priestley and the sturdy honesty of Belsham, this connection was an unfortunate one. They were obliged continually to explain that they were not to be held responsible either for the metaphysical doctrines or for many of the religious sentiments of its more conspicuous members, — that they agreed with them only in being Antitrinitarians. There are times in which religious truth is exposed to particular persecution and obloquy, when it may be well for its defenders to combine into a sect for mutual encouragement and support. But the pressure from without must be great to render it advisable. The combination implied in the formation of a religious sect at the present day, with a distinctive name, is attended with great evils. It is, however, favored by many through their love of sympathy, and from the excitement of party feeling, or because, as members or zealots of a sect, they may attain to a consideration which, as standing alone, they could not possess. But religious truth, the great means of improving the condition of mankind, is not to be ascertained and made efficacious through the combination of men into religious parties, though its influence may be greatly impeded by such combinations.

The name of "Unitarians," to whatever honor it had been raised by the persecuted "Polish Brotherhood," the *Fratres Poloni*, in the seventeenth century, was an unfortunate name to be assumed in the beginning of the nineteenth, by a sect among us. It was explained as denoting merely a disbelief of the doctrine of the Trinity, and as including all (that is, as was then meant, all *Christians*) who rejected that doctrine, whatever might be their differences of opinion respecting the language of Scripture which has been supposed to relate to it. But were Christian sects at the present day to be founded at all, it must be bad to found them on disbelief, and especially, as in the present case, on the dis-

belief of a particular doctrine, — that of the Trinity. It is giving this doctrine a solitary place of preëminence among a multitude of other errors all linked together, and some of them equally, or even far more, disastrous. The ill consequences of a name of such indefinite comprehensiveness, and so easily abused, when this name is assumed by a religious party, were not at once perceived. But they have become conspicuous. When a Unitarian was first spoken of among us, a unitarian Christian, as I have said, was meant. But the adjunct "unitarian" has succeeded to a great extent in dispossessing the substantive "Christian" of its power; and the Christian Unitarians among us have found themselves brought into strange connection with such men as Fox and Martineau in England, with the pantheists Spinoza and Schleiermacher, and with the most noted of modern infidels, Strauss, — all of whom I have seen praised, and recommended as religious instructors, in what were professedly Unitarian publications. Some of the obscurer ramifications of the sect have even intertwined themselves with the Fourierites and Communists of France.

I have already got beyond the date of the period to which your inquiry related. But I am unwilling to conclude with the few sentences last written. What is now wanting to the progress and influence of rational religion among us is a revival of the feeling of the importance of religious truth, — a practical conviction of the fact, which, however obvious and indisputable, does not seem to be generally recognized, that it is only by religious truth that religious errors, with all their attendant evils, can be done away, and of a fact equally obvious, that, in the present conflict of opinions, minds disciplined in habits of correct reasoning and informed by extensive learning, minds acquainted with the different branches of theological science; which embraces or touches upon all the higher and more important subjects of thought, are required for the attainment and communication of religious truth. In one word, it is learned and able theologians who are wanted, — such men as Mr. Buckminster.

I wish I had more reason to hope that this letter may be of any service to you. Such as it is, it is wholly at your disposal.

Very truly yours,

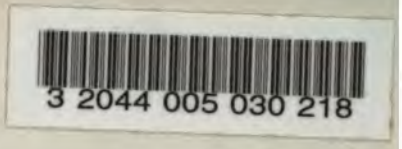
ANDREWS NORTON.

*Cambridge*, 17 *May*, 1849.










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